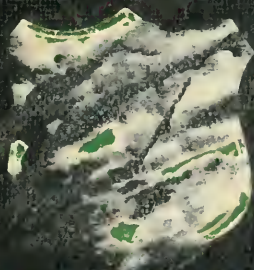


LORD GLENESK  
AND THE  
"MORNING POST"



REGINALD LUCAS

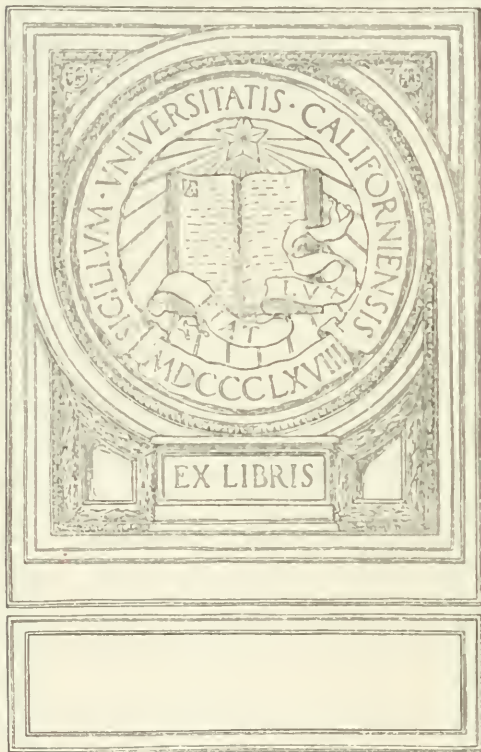
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LORD GLENESK AND THE  
“MORNING POST”







James T. Barker, 1885

*Lord Glenesk*







# LORD GLENESK AND THE "MORNING POST"

BY

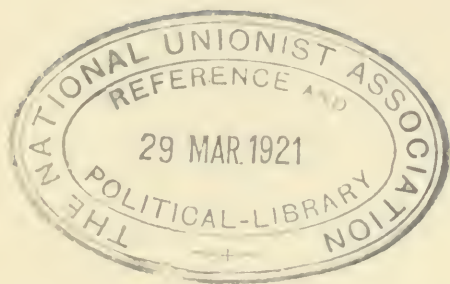
REGINALD LUCAS

AUTHOR OF "COLONEL SAUNDERSON: A MEMOIR,"  
"ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW," ETC.



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## PREFACE

LIBRARY SETS  
BY the favour of Lord Glenesk's daughter, Countess Bathurst, I have been permitted to undertake the task of writing this memoir.

When a man has spent fifty years in journalism, politics, and society, the record of his life must assuredly be full of interest ; whether that interest has been successfully reproduced here is another matter. The biographer must be prepared to receive judgment according to his own merits, not those of his subject.

DEC 6 1940  
I have to express my dutiful recognition of the permission granted by His Majesty King Edward to refer to the private conversation of Queen Victoria ; also my respectful thanks for leave given by the ex-Empress of the French to describe the personal relations that existed between Lord Glenesk and the Imperial Family.

HARDING  
The lamented death of Mr E. E. Peacock, the Manager of the *Morning Post*, deprived me of a continuance of the kind and valuable assistance and advice which he was always ready to afford me ; but I remain indebted to Mr M. T. Ferguson, who has ungrudgingly placed at my disposal his intimate acquaintance with the affairs and records of the paper.

I have to thank all those who have kindly consented to the publication of private letters; and amongst those who have given me information concerning Lord Glenesk's earlier days, and other matters, professional and private, I ought to make special acknowledgment to Lady Dorothy Nevill, Mr G. W. Smalley, Mr T. Gibson Bowles, M.P., and Colonel Ivor Maxse, Coldstream Guards.

R. L.

ALBANY, PICCADILLY,  
*April 1910.*



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# LORD GLENESK AND THE “MORNING POST”

## CHAPTER I

THE “MORNING POST,” 1772-1849

THE history of journalism must obviously be one of extraordinary interest, but it is not easy to do it justice in a chapter. According to Dr Johnson<sup>1</sup> we must trace it to ancient Rome, where we shall find, if not the form of modern newspapers, at all events a good deal of their spirit: for instance, the following extracts from the *Acta Diurna* of A.U.C. 585 have a familiar appearance:—“The Senate assembled at the Curia Hostilia about the eighth hour”; (“The Speaker took the chair at 3 P.M.”). “It thundered: an oak was struck with lightning on that part of Mount Palatine called Summa Velia”; (On the day of writing: “A heavy thunderstorm broke over Cromer at 2.15 on Monday afternoon: the roads were temporarily impassable”). “A fray happened in a tavern at the lower end of Banker’s Street in which the keeper of the ‘Hog in Armour’ Tavern was dangerously wounded”: “Tutinius, the *Ædile*, fined the butcher for selling meat which had not been inspected by the overseers of the markets”; and so on.

<sup>1</sup> *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1740; see *The Fourth Estate*, by F. Knight Hunt.

Modern journalism may be considered to have had its origin in the fifteenth century, when news-sheets were common enough in Germany, although the application of printing to the purpose does not appear to have occurred to anyone. The official *Notizie Scritte* of Venice in the middle of the next century was only circulated in manuscript. It was either exhibited or read out to audiences, who paid a gazetta apiece for the privilege of hearing the news; whence came the word gazette.

The composing and circulating of news-letters in England had long been practised, but it amounted to little more than public letter-writing on a large scale. It was not until 1622 that Nathaniel Butter first issued a printed sheet under the title of the *Weekly News*. In 1665 the *London Gazette* was established, and newspapers had become so far recognised that a censorship was instituted in 1662. In 1690 Berrow's *Worcester Journal* appeared, and it has survived to our day,<sup>1</sup> with what vicissitudes is not known. Posts, Mercuries, Courants and Messengers followed in quick succession, and the Press had come into existence. It is necessary to bear in mind that during this period, and for long afterwards, the pamphlet was the favourite channel of communication between the publicist and the public. Instead of writing to the papers as we do, our ancestors, when they had anything to say, printed independently.

Macaulay, describing the tyranny of Elizabeth,<sup>2</sup> says: "Severe restraint was imposed on political and religious discussion. The number of presses at one time was limited. No man could print without a license; and

<sup>1</sup> Sell's *Dictionary of the World's Press*, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> *Burleigh and his Times*.



every work had to undergo the scrutiny of the Primate or the Bishop of London. Persons whose writings were displeasing to the Court were mutilated like Stubbs or put to death like Penry."<sup>1</sup>

An attempt was once made to prove that a newspaper had actually been printed and published in the year 1588 called the *English Mercurie*; but critical examination revealed the forgery of the copy produced, and with Nathaniel Butter remains the honour of initiation.

In 1673 the idea of inserting advertisements was conceived, but it may be supposed that the development and spread of journalism was not very rapid, for it was not until nearly a quarter of a century later that the Press caught the attention of a Chancellor of Exchequer searching for fresh objects for taxation. So late as 1695 the *Flying Post* is recommended in this primitive style: "If any gentleman has a mind to oblige his country friend or correspondent with this account of public affairs, he can have it for 2d. of J. Salisbury at the Rising Sun in Cornhill on a sheet of fine paper, half of which being blank, he may thereon write his own affairs on the material news of the day."

In the reign of Queen Anne there was a marked growth of enterprise and of regulation.<sup>2</sup> In 1701 a

<sup>1</sup> Stubbs, for writing a pamphlet against the proposed marriage of Elizabeth with the Duke of Anjou, had his hand struck off; Penry was sentenced to death by the Star Chamber for setting forth a book for Sir R. Knightley which gave offence, in 1588.

<sup>2</sup> This may for some reasons be regarded as the golden age of journalism. In 1704 Defoe brought out the *Review* as a weekly paper. Originally confined to politics, it gradually assumed a literary character, and encouraged the production of the *Spectator* and the *Tatler*, besides the less fortunate *Guardian* and *Englishman*. At no time can periodical literature be said to have reached a higher level of excellence.

proposal had been made in Parliament to impose a penny tax on all papers, but it was withdrawn; a shilling tax on advertisements was, however, agreed to. In 1712 taxation began. A halfpenny stamp was required of every published half sheet; anything larger than that must pay a penny. As time went on, Government became more exacting: in 1760 the penny was made common to all; in 1776 the charge was raised to 1½d.; in 1789 to 2d.; in 1794 to 2½d., until the war taxation in 1815 brought it up to 4d. To this must be added the duty on paper, originally imposed in 1694,<sup>1</sup> with the result that the general price of newspapers rose as high as 7d. It naturally followed that the range and influence of the Press were narrowly confined, as the author of a very valuable history of the Platform has pointed out.

The early part of George III.'s reign may, I think, be fairly assigned as the period in our history when the Platform began to make its appearance in public life. . . . The Press, the other great organ of public opinion, though affording some vent for their feelings, was insufficient. Newspapers were dear; their circulation was not large; and furthermore, it was not everyone who could obtain the opportunity of discussing subjects therein.<sup>2</sup>

The stamp was not abolished until 1855, and the paper duty, as we shall learn, lasted six years longer; but so heavy a burden was not likely to be borne without a murmur, and in 1830 agitation became pronounced. Unstamped papers began to appear, and a long course of litigation commenced. A determined man named Hetherington issued a defiant sheet with

<sup>1</sup> Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates*. Elsewhere 1714 and 1745 are also given.

<sup>2</sup> *The Platform*, by Henry Jephson, vol. i. 31, ii. 576.

the significant title of the *Poor Man's Guardian*. He was imprisoned more than once, but he was unyielding. In 1832 Lytton Bulwer moved in the House of Commons to reduce the tax to 1d., partly on the ground that the spread of knowledge was being unduly checked, partly that reputable papers were suffering from unfair competition with cheap and illegitimate prints. The loss of revenue he proposed to make good by placing a postage charge on newspapers sent to the country.<sup>1</sup> His effort failed; but four years later the 4d. was reduced to 1d. Hetherington was a man of principle; he was content to pay his penny, and in 1836 he brought out a *Dispatch*, duly stamped, at 2d. a copy.<sup>2</sup>

At the moment when the taxing of newspapers was finding favour, a noteworthy advance was made by the publication of the first daily paper. Until now the Press had been periodical; evening papers were to come later, but henceforth the *Daily Courant*, a one-sided sheet, could boast of leading the way.<sup>3</sup> The "Gentlemen of the Press" have established their posi-

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the courtesy of the Postmaster-General for the following information upon the obscure point concerning newspaper postage. In the early days of the post office, certain officials, called clerks of the roads, were allowed the exclusive privilege of sending newspapers free of charge. In 1834 this privilege was made general and all newspapers were then transmitted free, by what was called the general post—the postage being covered by the stamp duty. The general post was, however, distinct from the various penny posts in London and many provincial towns, and when a newspaper was sent by general post to a place within the area of a penny post, it was the practice to make a charge of a penny for delivery. On the introduction of the general penny post in 1840 this fee was abolished; but a penny was still charged under certain conditions until 1870, when the present rates of charge came into operation.

<sup>2</sup> *The Fourth Estate*.

<sup>3</sup> 1703. The *Post Boy* had been brought out as a daily paper in 1695, but it only ran for four days.

tion so securely in our time, and their profession includes so many writers of admitted excellence, that it is worth observing how they were regarded a hundred years ago. Going further back, Macaulay describes the plight and status of those who would now be in honourable position and repute as leader-writers on one side of politics or the other. "Half the inhabitants of Grub Street garrets," he says, "paid their milk scores and got their shirts out of pawn by abusing Pitt. His German wars, his subsidies, his pension, his wife's peerage, were shin of beef and gin, blankets and baskets of small coal, to the starving poetasters of the Fleet."<sup>1</sup> In 1798 a member of Parliament spoke contemptuously of the "blaguard news-writers," and later on the Duke of Wellington wrote, in a phrase which would have astonished and enraged the gentleman named, of "Croker and the scribbling set."<sup>2</sup> In 1808 the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn proposed to exclude from the Bar all persons who had written in the daily press, upon which James Stephen, who was shortly to become a Master in Chancery, boldly admitted that he had been glad enough at one time to earn his livelihood in this way. And twenty years later a Lord Chancellor offended the propriety of his supporters by inviting the editor of the *Times* to dinner.<sup>3</sup>

Long before this, however, the power of the Press must have been recognised or foreseen, even if journalism had not come into high esteem. The Government had, at all events, realised the inconvenience of criticism and had consistently done their best to stifle it. Judge

<sup>1</sup> *Earl of Chatham*.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Letters of Sir James Graham*, i. 419.

<sup>3</sup> Lyndhurst. See Greville, 5th Dec. 1834.

Jeffreys had sentenced John Tutchin to seven years' imprisonment for presuming to write in defence of Monmouth. But Tutchin was irrepressible: in 1704 he was tried at the Guildhall for libelling the Government in his paper the *Observer*. He escaped on some technical point, but so objectionable was his writing that agents were employed to waylay him one night and beat him to death. At a later date Bute contemplated establishing a newspaper for his own protection and the advocacy of his plans.<sup>1</sup>

This brings us to the relations between the Press and Parliament, which may be outlined here. The first semblance of Parliamentary reporting is to be found in the Diurnal of Occurrences in the reign of Charles I. During the Commonwealth the practice was encouraged, but it was rigidly repressed at the Restoration, and only partially restored after the Revolution. From the first, Parliament had viewed any project of publicity with jealousy and apprehension. In 1641 the House of Commons by resolution forbade any member to publish or give notes of proceedings, and two years later extended the prohibition to all persons whomsoever, unless permission had been given. In 1698 the House of Lords declared the publication of their debates without leave to be a breach of privilege. As late as 1875 Lord Hartington moved to rescind all rules of restriction upon publication, but his proposal was not accepted. Consequently the prohibition still remains, and might conceivably lead to prosecution in case of misrepresentation or abuse.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the resolution of 1641 it was not unusual

<sup>1</sup> For these overtures see Bubb Dodington's *Diary*, 20th December 1760.

<sup>2</sup> Sir T. Erskine May, *Parliamentary Practice*.

for members of the House of Commons to send down reports of business to their constituents, and one of the most diligent of these correspondents was Andrew Marvel, member for Hull. Another early reporter, better known for other reasons, was Locke, who published an account of a debate in the House of Lords in 1675 from notes supplied by Lord Shaftesbury. It took the form of "a letter from a person of quality to his friend in the country"; but the liberty was indignantly resented, and the publication was ordered to be burnt by the public hangman. This was the usual manner of showing disapproval: as late as 1744 we read of a speech by Sir John Knight being published and suppressed in the same way.

In fact, the Press were confronted with two obstacles—the objection of Government to criticism and attack, and the dislike of Parliament to publicity. The latter indeed was not without intelligible motive. It was frequently and sincerely urged that if members were to lose the protection of secrecy, they would be thrown into frequent embarrassment with their constituents: "reports were highly prejudicial to the interests of gentlemen in their boroughs," said one of them, not without truth.<sup>1</sup>

On 13th April 1738 Speaker Onslow drew the attention of the House of Commons to the spread of the "mischievous practice of reporting, whereby the pro-

<sup>1</sup> In 1753 Lord Temple is reported as uttering this odd sentence in the House of Lords: "Loved he did the liberty of the Press, yet thought the abuse in the daily papers ought to be noticed." In the reign of George III. the spread and daring of journalistic enterprise alarmed Lord Mansfield: "The comfort of reading the newspapers!" he exclaimed, when he heard them praised as a luxury. "Mark my words . . . a little sooner or later these newspapers will write the Dukes of Northumberland out of their titles and possessions."



ceedings were liable to grave misrepresentation," and left it to some gentleman to propose a remedy ; upon which followed a memorable debate. Mr Thomas Winnington was one of the most emphatic in protest : " For my own part, sir, I am not afraid of speaking my voice in this House ; but I should be very sorry to see anything I say in this House misrepresented in a public newspaper. . . ." Sir Robert Walpole sang the same song : " You have with great justice punished some persons for forging the names of gentlemen upon the backs of letters, but the abuse now complained of is, I conceive, a forgery of a worse kind ; for it tends to misrepresent the sense of Parliament and impose upon the understanding of the whole nation. . . . I have read some debates of the House, sir, in which I have been made to speak the very reverse of what I meant. I have read others of them wherein all the wit, the learning, the argument, has been thrown into one side. . . ." Herein, it must be admitted, he only uttered a grievance familiar enough to political speakers both in and out of Parliament in our days of free and full reporting. And we may pause a moment to make the following observation. Only those who speak much can appreciate the constant vexation and disappointment caused by slovenly or inadequate reporting. An anxiously prepared speech in the House of Commons is dismissed with a couple of lines, not necessarily conveying so much as the point and meaning of the words uttered. A long address to a provincial audience may be reported fully, but mangled beyond all chance of recognition, by an inexperienced reporter, who is ignorant or careless, and who substitutes for verbal record the general impression conveyed to his mind. All this is irritating enough : on the other hand,

it is not every one whose fluency and diction are so easy and correct that they will bear reproduction with the accuracy of a gramophone. Shorthand writing seems to have been introduced into this country in the reign of Elizabeth, although its origin is lost in antiquity. When Parliamentary reporting was forbidden, it was probably employed surreptitiously by strangers in the galleries to preserve fragments of debate, although it is alleged that the first to make the attempt were the representatives of the *Morning Chronicle*, when Mr Perry was editor in 1769.<sup>1</sup> A little later, when concealment was no longer necessary, a number of gentlemen engaged some shorthand writers to report them *verbatim et literatim*; but their speeches presented such a confusion of hesitation, repetition, and bad grammar, that they hastened to stop the practice and begged the reporters to bestow on their orations some adornments of elegance and form.

George II. is said to have preferred a smuggled version of a King's Speech to the real text, on the ground that it read better. There can be little doubt that many members of Parliament had cause to be amazed at their own eloquence whilst Dr Johnson was reporter for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, between 1740 and 1743. Boswell says: "What we certainly know to have been done by him was the debates in both Houses of Parliament under the name of the Senate of Lilliput, sometimes with figured names of the several speakers, sometimes with denominations formed of the letters of their real names. . . . Parliament kept the Press in a

<sup>1</sup> Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates*. Yet the Parliament of 1768-74 was known as the unreported Parliament, owing to the obstacles raised against the admission of strangers.

kind of mysterious awe, which made it necessary to have recourse to such devices. More than this: there is an account of a dinner given by Sir John Hawkins at which the liveliest admiration was expressed of a reported speech of Chatham's. Suddenly the Doctor broke in: 'That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter Street. . . . I was never in the House of Commons but once.' And when someone praised his impartiality, he made his famous avowal: 'That is not quite true, sir; I saved appearances well enough; but I took care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it.'" Cave, the editor, would get access to the galleries by the aid of some member; then, with such notes as he could take and such effort of memory as he could exert, he would hurry to the garret in Exeter Street, where Johnson would evolve out of the raw material the rounded periods and sonorous phrases appropriate to the Senate of Lilliput. Such was the universal principle, and members were necessarily at the mercy of capricious memories and varied imaginations.

So much for the difficulties and hazards of reporting. Speaker Onslow's views were embodied in a resolution which was carried unanimously, and Parliament went on its way protesting against public inquisitiveness. But a crisis was reached in 1771.<sup>1</sup> In that year the debates upon Wilkes' election were published in the *London Evening Post*. The Speaker issued his warrant for the arrest of the offenders. Wilkes himself and Oliver, as aldermen of the City of London, dismissed the charge. Not content with this, they secured the countenance of the Lord Mayor, in conjunction with whom they asserted the privileges and exemptions

1743-1746 appears to have been the most barren period of reporting.

peculiar to the City, and threatened to imprison the Sergeant-at-Arms' messenger for acting on an informal warrant. The upshot of this was that the Lord Mayor and Oliver were sent to the Tower; against Wilkes no action was attempted. At the end of the session the prisoners were entitled to their freedom, and found themselves heroes. Parliament, weary of the struggle, gave way, and with resolutions unrevoked and prohibitions unrepealed the system of reporting was permitted to grow into its present elaborate dimensions.

It has been said that the other great impediment in the way of a free Press was the constant prosecutions for libel. Steele had been expelled from the House in 1713 because his writings annoyed the Government of the day. Wilkes was expelled when No. 45 of the *North Briton* appeared in 1763. The catalogue of convictions against editors and proprietors is astonishing, both in quality and quantity. The King, the Royal Family, the Government, the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, the Solicitor-General, the Duke of Wellington, were some of those, and there were many more, who caused fine or imprisonment to be inflicted on incautious critics year after year until far into the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

An attempt has been made to give some idea of the character and fortunes of the British Press in days unknown to our generation. Let us now trace amongst these early and unsettled conditions the progress of the *Morning Post*. The first number appeared on 2nd November 1772. It was probably the successor of one

<sup>1</sup> Sheridan, inveighing against Pitt's measures, and the authority and influence with which he was able to enforce them, exclaimed, "Give me but the liberty of the Press and . . . I will go forth to meet him undismayed."

of the many *Advertisers* which were as often as not ephemeral, and its original title was the *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of one day, when the editor was indisposed, it has been since then as regular as the morning sun, and has outlived every one of its contemporaries. It consisted of four pages, each measuring twenty inches by fourteen, and it was published at one penny.<sup>2</sup> It is not certainly known who was the editor, but tradition has given the credit to John Bell. Whoever he was, he had no lack of enterprise. It occurred to him that by assuming the form of a pamphlet he might evade the stamp duty; accordingly he printed on separate sheets of two pages each.<sup>2</sup> But the Board of Inland Revenue were too quick for him, and a fortnight later this paragraph was inserted: "This present paper will be delivered for only one halfpenny more than the former, and although every paper stands the proprietor in a penny extraordinary, the various publishers will be established in every part of the town, and it will be sold for three halfpence." It will be remembered that the tax at this time was one penny on all papers. The four pages at the same time were increased to eight.

In 1775 the editor was the Rev. Henry Bate, a man whose career deserves notice.<sup>3</sup> He was the son of a clergyman, and had been Rector of Fambridge in Essex. "The gaieties of the metropolis," however, had attractions for him, and he transferred his energies to London and journalism. In 1780 he quarrelled with the *Post* and founded the *Morning Herald*. The author of *The*

<sup>1</sup> *English Newspapers*, i. 220.

<sup>2</sup> "Lord Glenesk and the *Morning Post*," by M. T. Ferguson, the *National Review*, July 1909.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Johnson had a low opinion of him. Boswell, ch. 55.

*Fourth Estate* says that whilst thus engaged he fought no fewer than three duels ; but on his own showing, one of these, at all events, arose out of his connection with the *Morning Post*. The circumstances are set forth in Macaulay's essay on Croker's *Boswell*, and therein we have the great Whig's estimate of the merits of the paper. "Mr Croker," he says, "states that Mr Henry Bate, who afterwards assumed the name of Dudley, was proprietor of the *Morning Herald*, and fought a duel with George Robinson Stoney, in consequence of some attacks on Lady Strathmore, which appeared in that paper. Now Mr Bate was then connected, not with the *Morning Herald*, but with the *Morning Post* ; and the dispute took place before the *Morning Herald* was in existence. The duel was fought in January 1777. . . . The *Morning Herald*, as any person may see by looking at any number of it, was not established till some time after this affair. For this blunder there is, we must acknowledge, some excuse ; for it certainly seems almost incredible to a person living in our time that any human being should ever have stooped to fight with a writer in the *Morning Post*": which is, of course, a political "aside" ; for it is not difficult to believe that in duelling days the free personalities indulged in by the *Morning Post* must have frequently brought the editor into danger of conflict.<sup>1</sup>

Bate assumed the name of Dudley under the conditions of a will by which he inherited a property from a friend. He then bought the reversion of another living in Essex, having perhaps had enough of the gaieties of the metropolis, and here he spent large sums of money on improvements in the church and parish.

<sup>1</sup> *National Review*, *cit.*



When the incumbent died, however, the Bishop refused to induct him, and he was obliged to continue his secular occupations. Fortunately for him, he was in high favour with the Regent, thanks to whom he presently became chancellor of the diocese of Ferns, with a valuable rectory attached, and, later on, a baronet. But he was not yet to subside into a state of peace. In 1816 there were riots near Ely, and as a county magistrate he is found leading a body of yeomanry and militia into action, with so much gallantry and effect that he was officially thanked and publicly presented with a piece of plate. Nor does this exhaust the list of his varied accomplishments: he was an author,<sup>1</sup> and produced numerous works, including an essay on the Poor Laws and a comic opera entitled *The Blackamoor Washed White*. His extraordinary career ended in 1824.

Bate was neither the first nor the last journalist to find that his profession carried bodily danger with it. As far back as the days of the Stewarts, the writer of a news-letter called Coleman had had his life sworn away by Titus Oates. In the early days of the nineteenth century, when political life was full of violence, one editor of the *Morning Post*, Eugenius Roche, had been imprisoned for libel, whilst another, Nicholas Byrne, was destined to be assassinated in his office as the penalty of his outspoken Toryism. In 1784 another clergyman was editor, the Rev. W. Jackson; to him succeeded John Taylor. It is not known who was the proprietor, but whoever he was he appears to have quarrelled with the former for using too much stationery, and with the latter for drinking too much punch.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He had contributed to the *Rolliad* (Moore's *Life of Sheridan*).

<sup>2</sup> *English Newspapers*.

In 1792, when Mr Tattersall<sup>1</sup> was proprietor, or part proprietor, of the paper, it was chiefly noted, as might be expected, for its advertisements of horses and carriages. But he was not satisfied with his business: the circulation was not more than 350 a day, and he sold it to Peter and Daniel Stuart in 1795 for £600. With him retired Mr Christie, the auctioneer; but when the latter saw matters mending a few years later, he desired to return.

The Stuarts were likely to improve the property, and were evidently men of ability and zeal. It was Peter's boast that he had founded the first regular evening paper, the *Star*, in 1788. As far back as 1715 there had been a *St James' Evening Post*, but this and its imitators were issued only fitfully. The brothers appear indeed to have suffered little from scruples in pushing their fortunes, for it is recorded that in 1796 the proprietors of the *Telegraph* obtained £100 damages from the *Morning Post* for causing them to be supplied with false news for the purpose of damaging their credit.

Daniel Stuart is a source of much information. When Coleridge's *Table Talk* appeared in 1838, the allegations of ill-usage which it contained drew from him a lengthy apologia.<sup>2</sup> He speaks generally of the capricious temper shown by literary men, and gives as an example the indignant refusal of Burns, to whom he had made overtures of employment. Coleridge had complained that his labours were poorly recompensed, whilst Stuart set up a fine carriage; that by his individual efforts the circulation of the *Post* was raised to 7000. Stuart

<sup>1</sup> Mr Richard Tattersall, founder of the famous establishment at Knightsbridge.

<sup>2</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*.



disclaims the first assertion and disproves the latter: it is true that the sale of the *Courier*, for which Coleridge sometimes wrote under his editorship, later on reached as high as 10,000 during one fortnight, but the *Post*, so long as Stuart had to do with it, never exceeded 4500. He retaliates on Coleridge with a charge of unpunctuality and unreliable habits. He once took him to the House of Commons on purpose to report a speech of Pitt's: Coleridge slept through it and produced a report entirely from his imagination—of which Canning is reported to have said that it did more credit to his head than his memory. On another occasion he undertook to write characters of Pitt and Bonaparte: the first was supplied, and it created so great a sensation that Stuart was continually questioned as to when the promised sequel would appear. It never did. In the course of his narrative Stuart declares that his policy was to go in for varied advertisements, with a large element of those for servants; exciting news, fires, fights, and sensational law cases; but with no intrusion of fashionable intelligence. Against this must be set the statement of another eminent contributor, Charles Lamb, who says of Stuart's management that "chat of the day, scandal, but, above all, dress, furnished the material," and in large measure the manufacture of jokes. Sixpence a joke, he says, was the recognised tariff, and grievous was the strain involved in trying to make supply meet demand.<sup>1</sup> Southey was another contributor: in fact, the best-known men of letters can be traced consecutively in the columns of the *Post* from Southey to Alfred Austin, and Coleridge to Kipling. Much might be written of their experiences

<sup>1</sup> *Essays of Elia*, "Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago."

as journalists, but this would involve an excursion into biography.

The same may be said of the reporters. The history of the reporters' gallery would be full of interest. We have had a glimpse of Johnson there. Hazlitt followed in his steps. Charles Dickens first worked there for the *True Sun*. Many of those who defied and overcame the obstacles put in their way must have been men of character and spirit. Woodfall was one of these. He would sit through an entire debate making only an occasional note, when nobody was looking, and with the aid of an extraordinary memory would reproduce a complete report next day. To sustain his strength he filled his pockets with hard-boiled eggs, which he ate as best he could under cover of his hat. It was a common practice with his rivals to steal these and substitute fresh eggs for his inconvenience and confusion.

Another celebrity was Mark Supple. On one occasion, when there happened to be a moment's pause in the business of the House, he shouted out, "A song from Mr Speaker," which was so successful a sally that it is said that Pitt could scarcely keep his seat in his paroxysms of laughter.<sup>1</sup> The Sergeant-at-Arms was sent to arrest the offender, who sat with every appearance of innocence and detachment until, as it were with proper indignation, he pointed to an old and fat Quaker, who was incontinently taken into custody. In recent years a number of men who have made some mark in life began their careers as shorthand writers—to one of them it must be left to do the story justice.

The end of Stuart's connection with the *Post* is not

<sup>1</sup> *The Fourth Estate.*

free from obscurity. In the course of his reply to Coleridge he goes on to deal with the case of Lane, from whom, by the way, a rejoinder was immediately forthcoming. The quarrel arose out of a determination on the part of the publishers of London to have a paper of their own, because they were not content with the inadequate space allowed to their advertisements in the *Post* and elsewhere. They therefore, to obtain the accommodation refused by the *Morning Post*, set up a morning paper, the *British Press*; and to oppose the *Courier*, an evening one, the *Globe*. Hence the claim of the *Globe* to be the oldest evening paper. But books and newspapers never seem to thrive under the same management. Disraeli's subsequent attempt to conduct one under the auspices of John Murray led to unfortunate results with which we are familiar.<sup>1</sup> This combined project fared no better. The publishers gradually withdrew their support, and Lane, as manager, was left to struggle on almost alone, the paper gradually becoming a pronounced supporter of the Whig party. It would appear from the correspondence that Stuart was connected with the *Post* and the *Courier* at the same time, whereas it would be easier to believe that he left one to go to the other. However that may be, he distinctly says that he sold and finally left the *Morning Post* in August 1803. He adds that at this time the circulation was 4500, and that no other daily morning paper sold as many as 3000 copies.

In spite of these low figures the profits were high. When Perry died in 1821, the circulation of the *Morning*

<sup>1</sup> This paper, the *Representative*, was started in 1826. It ran for six months at a loss to Murray of £26,000. The episode is full of interest to all students of Disraeli's career. See *A Publisher and his Friends*, by S. Smiles, ch. xxvi.

*Chronicle* was under 3000, yet his income was nearly £12,000 a year.<sup>1</sup> But this is explained to some extent by the comparatively trifling expenses of production. Apart from taxes, the cost of publishing a paper was infinitesimal in comparison with the average of to-day. The wages bill was as nothing by the side of modern demands. Salaries were not only lower; there were very few of them. A few compositors, pressmen, and boys composed the office staff; there were no special correspondents drawing large salaries in every direction.

In the *Morning Post* of 24th April 1905 it is asserted that "the first regular war correspondent for a daily paper in the sense in which the duties have been discharged by such men as Sir W. H. Russell, the late Archibald Forbes, and Mr E. F. Knight, was Charles Lewis Gruneisen, who represented the *Morning Post* in the Carlist War of 1837." The *Times* claims to have had a representative in the Peninsula in 1807, and this is technically true. Crabb Robinson had been sent to Altona in 1807, whence he sent reports of the battles of Dantzic and Friedland. He was then sent to the Peninsula, where he watched events leading up to and including the battle of Corunna. But he never considered that his duty required his presence on the field of battle, and he never saw a shot fired, unless it were at a very great distance.<sup>2</sup> He cannot be claimed as the forerunner of St Leger Herbert and G. A. Ferrand, who were killed while acting as *Morning Post* correspondents, one in the Soudan in 1885, the other at Ladysmith in 1900. However that may be, the salaries paid at the beginning of the century left ample margin for profit. Nor did Stuart exercise any mean economies when he

<sup>1</sup> *The Fourth Estate*.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Diary*, i. 231.

left the *Post*. Charles Lamb sought employment with the *Albion*, where he bemoans the transition from "handsome apartments, from rosewood desks and silver inkstands to an office—no office, but a den rather . . . from the centre of loyalty and fashion, to a focus of vulgarity and sedition."

In connection with this period it is surprising to hear that the Regent was at one time proprietor or part proprietor; and this episode must be noted. In 1812 Mr Benjafield, a Suffolk magistrate, brought an action for libel against the editor of a Bury newspaper for saying that he had for years drawn an annuity from the Prince of Wales as the price of suppressing certain articles, during his editorship of the *Morning Post*, about the Prince and Mrs Fitz Herbert. His case was this. In 1783 he bought an interest in the *Morning Post*. Mr Tattersall was another part proprietor, and together they took a lease of the paper. In 1788 he, as acting editor, took a strong line against the Prince upon the Regency question. The Prince thereupon sent an agent to buy the paper and instal a friendly editor. With the consent of his colleagues, Benjafield agreed to terms. After two years the Prince's agent ceased payment, and for some reason, which he does not explain, Benjafield was henceforth guaranteed in his claim by Mr Tattersall, an obligation which was carried out after his death in 1795 by his son Richard. It presently transpired that the Tattersalls had all along been reimbursed by the Prince. Benjafield vowed that he knew nothing of this: moreover, he had regarded the transaction with the Prince's agent as a purely political bargain. His defence, however, as set forth in a pamphlet, is not quite convincing; and two points are

against him: he has to admit that in 1788 the Prince appealed to him to contradict an offensive paragraph; and when he brought his action for libel he lost it, in spite of a strong summing up in his favour by Lord Ellenborough.

I am indebted to Mr E. S. Tattersall for the following corroborative evidence: "When my great-grandfather (Richard) died there was something due from George IV. to his father, and I believe he looked on it as a bad debt. His son Richard, however (my father's uncle), did not take the same view, and saw George IV. when he became King about it, and it was paid. If ever anyone said a word against the King in his presence, he silenced him and said, 'I will not hear a word against him; he is an honourable man.'"

If further confirmation were needed it might be found in contemporary incidents. Moore was a contributor to the paper; he may well have been aware of the secret ownership, but it inspired no sense of loyalty or reverence. In "The Insurrection of the Papers" he wrote of the Prince's breakfast-table littered with

"Three plans of saddles, tea and toast,  
Death warrants and the *Morning Post*,"

which may or may not have some significance. More to the point is the case of Leigh Hunt. He and his brother were engaged at the time on the *Examiner*, and were frequent objects of prosecution for libel. One day the *Morning Post* spoke of the Regent as a "charmer of all hearts and an Adonis of loveliness." Leigh Hunt bluntly declared that this was foolish exaggeration, and called the Prince middle-aged. For this he was sent to prison, where he contrived to turn his captivity into a picturesque and pleasant episode; but it may be



inferred that his trouble was brought about by the close connection between the paper and the Prince.

The *Post* at this time was undoubtedly regarded in some quarters as too Liberal in its sympathies. Canning attached a good deal of importance to newspaper influence. In the *Anti-Jacobin* he apostrophises the well-known journalists in his "Ode to Gossip":

"And Thwaites and Stoddart tell the town  
The whys and wherefores of the State,  
And everything is clearly known  
As fixed by editorial fate."

And in the "New Morality" he inveighs against

" *Couriers* and *Stars*, seditious evening Host,  
Ye *Morning Chronicles* and *Morning Post*,  
Whether you make the rights of man your theme,  
Your country libel, or your gods blaspheme."

We have seen that Daniel Stuart deprecated the idea that the *Post* was particularly concerned with fashion and society.<sup>1</sup> Charles Lamb, on the contrary, implies that it was. The adventures of Henry Bate surely tend to confirm this. His duels arose out of paragraphs affecting individuals. Moreover, the paper was cast in damages for libel for £4000 in 1792. Moore adds evidence. In his *Letters of Miss Fudge to her Cousin* we are told how the aspiring authoress is enraptured when the *Morning Post* takes notice of her poems, and is well content that they should be recommended as a soporific to victims of insomnia.

There is no surer guide to public feeling than *Punch*. One might have looked to Leech to make the *Morning*

<sup>1</sup> Lord Eldon at the end of his life lamented that he could no longer make his voice heard in the House of Lords, "for not one word did I utter such as the *Morning Post* reports" (Twiss's *Life*).

*Post* the chosen reading of John Thomas; but he made no play with newspapers. When in later years the same legendary being protests to Mary Anne against the outrage of giving votes to "game keepers and such like rubbish and hac'shully not recognising us," it is the *Morning Post* that he has in his hand. The author of *The Fourth Estate*, describing the busy life of reporters, says: "The *Court Circular* is chronicling the Queen's proceedings; the *Morning Post* has its fashionable friend buzzing about Gunter's to hear of fashionable routs, or about Banting's to learn full particulars of a fashionable funeral."

Thackeray had a good deal to say about the *Post*. One may alter an adage and say that many people compound for sins they are inclined to, by damning those who have a mind to them likewise: consequently we all profess great horror and disgust of snobs and snobbishness, and we reverence Thackeray for having smitten them hip and thigh. But one is tempted at times to wonder whether the man who allowed himself to be so vexed about it all, and diagnosed the symptoms so acutely, was not himself something of an expert. "I'm not a Whig; but oh, how I should like to be one!" could never have been uttered by one in whom the instinct did not exist, and who detested the sign of it in others. Readers of his published letters are surely justified in holding this opinion. Consequently there is nothing incredible in the story, although it is probably an invention, that the author of *Vanity Fair* was angry at finding that his name never appeared in the lists of parties chronicled in the *Morning Post*. One evening he stopped in an entrance-hall and said to the recorder of names, "I am Mr Thackeray."



The official was said to have qualified for his appointment by previous service in fashionable circles upon a humble footing, and to have believed, rightly or wrongly, that Thackeray had turned him to account: "I know you are," was his answer, "and I am Charles James Yellowplush." Whether Thackeray was unhappy at missing his name in the *Morning Post*, or only despised those who were vexed when it happened to them, matters not; he was at all events aware of the value set upon it by common mortals as a medium for social glorification. This familiar passage shows his appreciation:

Had Colonel Newcome read the paper that morning, he might have seen amongst what are called the fashionable announcements, the cause, perhaps, why his sister-in-law had exhibited so much anger and virtue. The *Morning Post* stated that yesterday Sir Brian and Lady Newcome entertained at dinner His Excellency the Persian Ambassador and Buchsheesh Bey, the Right Honourable Canon Rowe, President of the Board of Control, and Lady Louisa Rowe, the Countess of Kew. . . . Afterwards her Ladyship had an assembly, which was attended by, etc., etc.

To take another instance at random: when the preposterous Major Gahmagan is bragging of the catholicity of his genius, it is the *Morning Post* which he quotes as attributing his volume of poems to "Miss Gahmagan." It was, perhaps, because he regarded it only as a vehicle of social information that Macaulay<sup>1</sup> used the opprobrious language which we have read. Certainly it is on record that a lady once

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay speaks of the *Post* again in "The Country Clergyman's Trip to Cambridge":

"Dr Buzz, who alone is a host,  
Who with arguments weighty as lead  
Proves six times a week in the *Post*  
That flesh somehow differs from bread."

declared that she could not feel that she was legally married until the announcement appeared in the *Post*.

But it must not be assumed that this was to remain its exclusive use and purpose. It has been alleged that another celebrated writer was once its editor, William Mackworth Praed. This seems to be a mistake; but he did contribute between the years 1833 and 1836, and it is a fact that in 1834 the Duke of Wellington supplied him with material for a defence in the columns of our paper during his controversy with the Ordnance Department. It would not be easy, and it is not necessary, to trace the successive proprietors and editors. The Tattersalls had long ceased their connection with the paper when the Regent became King, and it may be inferred that it had fallen into feeble hands, for it is said that during the reign of George IV. its fortunes were at their lowest ebb. The *Chronicle* spoke of it as a slop-pail of corruption, and it was elsewhere dubbed "the pet in petticoats," on account of its appeal to the favour of fashion.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps with Praed's advent a higher standard was established.

Early in the last century the office of the paper was moved from Fleet Street to 335 Strand, and in 1843 to Wellington Street.<sup>2</sup> To trace the development of machinery from the primitive flat press of 1772 to the newest inventions now employed would be too technical, nor is there need to draw contrasts between the *Post* and other papers. The *Times*, which grew out of the *Daily Universal Register* and began life in 1788, was first printed by steam in 1814. Long before this, it had been printed logographically; that is to say, Mr

<sup>1</sup> *English Newspapers*.

<sup>2</sup> The movement to the present site will be explained hereafter.







Emery Walker, Esq.

The "Morning Post" Offices, 1893 - 1905



Walter conceived the happy idea of having words cast entire to save the compositor the labour of collecting type. This is worth noting for two reasons: in the first place it is amusing to read that a hundredweight of the following words was ordered—dreadful robbery, atrocious outrage, fearful calamity, alarming explosion, loud cheers, interesting female: further, it is to be observed that the inventor complains that his system was derided by "one Bell, through the dull medium of the *Morning Post*," which may be taken as a foreshadowing of the rivalry to come. Headlines were introduced early, as anyone may learn who has visited H.M.S. "Victory" and seen the original newspapers announcing the battle of Trafalgar and Nelson's death. And it is surprising to learn that street shouting is not a new evil in our day. Canning once retired to the country because he could not bear "to walk the streets in such ill news." When Bellingham murdered Mr Perceval in 1812, the papers made great play with his name. As soon as the excitement began to subside it was reinvigorated by a device which would throw no discredit on the most audacious of modern shouters: "Third edition! third edition!—*Courier! Courier!*—Bellingham! Bellingham!—late news! late news!" This brought a renewed rush of buyers, who eagerly opened the paper to read: "We stop the press to announce that the sanguinary villain Bellingham has refused to be shaved."<sup>1</sup>

To-day, what is happening in Calcutta is known in the London clubs within a few hours. A hundred years ago news was no quicker in coming from Edinburgh. Thence came the report of Lord Grey's speech

<sup>1</sup> *The Fourth Estate.*

at the celebrated banquet in 1834, as fast as relays of galloping horses could carry it. When trains came into general use, the newspaper managers would engage specials to bring up reports of important events; but the advantages of enterprise were largely discounted in this case by the fact that in order to reduce expenses the representatives of rival papers were allowed to join. The introduction of the telegraph simplified matters, but only by degrees. The arrival of a foreign mail still caused a lively scene. The ship was at once surrounded, no matter what might be the hour of night, the season of the year, or the state of the weather, by boats containing pressmen, who clambered on board as best they could. Bundles of foreign papers were delivered to each of these gentlemen, who tumbled back again at the risk of drowning, and raced for the shore, rapidly running through the news as they went. Then came a struggle for the telegraph wires, and the dispatch of a message so condensed and cryptic as to resemble a cypher, but sufficient to enable an ingenious editor to elaborate a contents table as sensational as anything contemplated by the inventor of the logographic press, and to write a summary of news as ample as a studied essay.

Such were the conditions of journalism until the reign of Queen Victoria brought a complete transformation of our demands and our resources; and so far we can trace the career of the *Morning Post*, not always with fulness and precision of view, but sufficiently informed of its status and its fortunes; assured at all events of its tenacity of life amidst numerous vicissitudes and some impediments.

From 1847 to 1849 we are able to follow the history



through the correspondence of Mr Michele. This gentleman wins the affection of the biographer by his habit of dating every letter that reached him. He further appeals to one's sympathy for other reasons, which will appear. A sharp thorn in his side was Dr M——, a member of the staff. He was of foreign extraction, and full of zeal. He professes that Mr Michele's interests are dearer to him than his own, and frequently complains that his devotion has not been appreciated. When his contributions are not inserted, he protests that he cannot eat the bread of beggary by taking a salary for nothing. When it is suggested that his services might be dispensed with, he talks of beggary without bread, and alludes to some financial difficulties connected with his brother at home. He is working hard to get some prominent politicians to come to Mr Michele's assistance financially, and he is mysteriously connected with the Portland family. That this is no empty boast he demonstrates by the fact that the Duke has sent him £50 as a Christmas present. He repeatedly asserts that although he is poor he has great influence in high quarters: "They cannot move without me, even our great Stanley."

The position was this. Mr Crompton, a Lancashire paper manufacturer, had a mortgage of £25,000 on the paper. A draft agreement was drawn up under which Mr Michele was to pay £8000 down, and covenant to pay £17,000 in three yearly instalments. This is undated, but it must have been after Mr Crompton had asserted his claim, for it provides that "C. E. M. shall forthwith become the registered proprietor in lieu of T. B. C." Meanwhile, Mr Michele was appealing to the leaders of the Protectionist party, on the ground that if they did

not do something, the property must be sold and would very likely pass into the hands of the enemy. Mr Michele had been conducting the paper in their interest since 1833. In March 1848 a paragraph was unfortunately allowed to appear in the *Post*, in the editor's absence, throwing some discredit on the house of Rothschild, and Dr M——, changing his tone, writes enigmatically, "The confidence in the management of the *M.P.* is shaken. . . . The *M.P.* will, however, not remain in Crompton's hands. More I cannot say. Try your other resources." Two days later, however, he is writing, "With feelings of gratitude I can hardly express by words. . . . Command me, dear sir, and I shall be most happy and grateful to obey your orders." A fortnight later he writes another mysterious letter, half reproachful, half affectionate, ending with an assurance that "nothing will be done on *our* part to impair your position with Crompton": to which Mr Michele replies by a curt inquiry as to why the writer has left off coming to see him. It is next intimated that the religious tone of the paper has given offence, and the Doctor suddenly announces that he is charged by Lord George Bentinck to put himself into direct communication with Crompton, and "that the highest bidder will succeed with *him*"; to which Mr Michele replies that "that gentleman has no power to sell without my consent. He is merely the mortgagee."

In December 1847 Mr Michele had written a long letter to Lord George Bentinck: "If the hated name of 'Peel the traitor' is made to ring from side to side of the habitable globe, what is to be the fate of 'Michele the faithful'?" he asks. He urges that the Protectionists must have an organ, and that it would be better to buy

the *Morning Post* than to establish a new paper. The correspondence ran on. On 16th April 1848 Lord George wrote to Mr Michele from Harcourt House:

MY DEAR SIR,—Individually I can assure you I retain the same warm interest in the success of the *Morning Post* that ever I did, entertaining as I do the highest feelings of admiration for the fidelity to principle, the honour, and honesty with which it has all along been conducted under your management; but since I last communicated with you on the subject my personal position has entirely changed. I no longer lead any Party,<sup>1</sup> and am utterly stripped of all influence: as you are well aware, I possess no means myself and I no longer command any influence over others. The Jew question has virtually broken up the Protectionist Party. There is no longer any cohesion among the Old Party except on the Jew Bill,<sup>2</sup> and on that I differ from them.

Under the circumstances you will perceive that I am quite helpless to help you in any way.—Believe me, my dear sir, always very faithfully yours,

G. BENTINCK.

After Lord George's death in September Mr Michele turned to Lord Henry, whom he tried to tempt by quoting some surprising statistics: "So long ago as 1808 the *Morning Post* was sold for the sum of £120,875. The revenue at that time, and for many years, was about £23,000 per annum. From the period at which I became its proprietor the revenue has increased from that to £42,000, which has not been materially affected by the commercial panic." Lord Henry's answer was conclusive: "I am a borrower: not a lender." Finally the harassed editor tried the Duke as his last resource. He explained that in 1842 the paper had been partly his, partly the property of others, his own share being

<sup>1</sup> He had formally resigned on 7th February.

<sup>2</sup> Bills for admission of Jews to Parliament were repeatedly passed by the House of Commons and thrown out by the House of Lords, until 1858, when a compromise was effected and the disqualification removed.

the larger. At that time Sir Robert Peel had shown symptoms of wavering over the repeal of the Corn Laws. The other owners were inclined to support him, upon which Mr Michele had bought them out and become absolute and sole proprietor ; to effect this he had raised the £25,000 mortgage from Mr Crompton. He explained that Lord George had been willing and anxious to raise money amongst his political friends to enable Mr Michele to pay off his debt, and so be free to conduct the paper without interference from outside, this loan to be duly repaid, but at easier terms of interest. Would the Duke carry out what had been contemplated by his son ? The answer was not encouraging.

WELBECK, *November 9, 1848.*

SIR,—I have received a letter dated 2 Poet's Corner, November 7, signed C. Eastland Micholus or something like it. But as I cannot be sure to whom my answer may be delivered, I must defer it till I am better informed as to the signature.—I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

SCOTT PORTLAND.

Mr Michele at once sent his card ; but the Duke, having thought the matter over, declined to help. In January 1849 Mr Michele repeated all his arguments and petitions to the Duke of Richmond, with no better results, upon which he fell back on Mr Newdigate, M.P., with whom he had for some time been in communication, pointing out that unless he could meet Mr Crompton's claim at once, the paper must be sold to anyone who would purchase it, regardless of party interests. There was, however, to be no plain sailing for Mr Michele. And now Peter Borthwick comes on the scene.

*Mr Michele to Peter Borthwick.*

March 16, 1849.

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—I am really quite ashamed of the constant trouble I am causing you, but knowing the kind interest you have never ceased to take—on public as well as private grounds—in the *Morning Post*, I write to ask you to do me the favour to see Mr Newdigate once more. It was in December last that I wrote to that gentleman with reference to the present position of the *Morning Post*, and although I have had no direct answer from him, I have received from Dr M—— repeated communications which led me to believe that Mr Newdigate had taken the matter seriously in hand. . . . The enclosed letter . . . is so much at variance with his previous communications that I find it absolutely necessary to ascertain definitely whether . . . the Protectionist party or any gentleman is disposed to act.

*Mr Michele to Peter Borthwick.*

March 30, 1849.

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—I enclose you upwards of thirty of Dr M——'s written communications to me. . . . I think you will have no difficulty in gathering from this correspondence a pretty clear insight into the game the N—— clique are attempting to play. I see one of the letters conveys a distinct message from Newdigate to me. It will be desirable to show him this and ascertain whether the message was sent by his authority. . . . I had some hesitation in sending (letters marked "private") to you, but, on second thoughts, the conduct of the man in openly boasting that *he* is to have the *Morning Post* relieves me, I think, from the charge of breach of confidence.

Peter Borthwick appears to have appealed to Lord Malmesbury, who clearly resented any suggestion of ingratitude on the part of the Protectionists towards so loyal and able a supporter as Mr Michele, and merely regretted "the failure of Lord John Manners, myself and others in our sincere efforts to carry out his wishes."

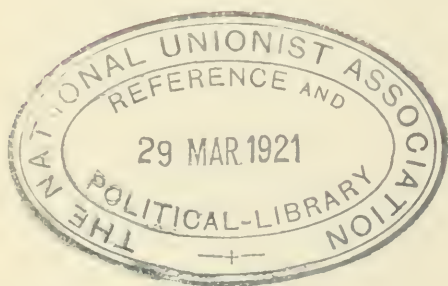
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A letter from Michele to Borthwick of 4th July 1849 shows that all hope of an arrangement had not been abandoned ; but by 5th October the end had come.

### *Mr Michele to Mr Inskipp.*

In handing in my resignation of the management of the *Morning Post* to Mr Crompton's agent (Mr Fry), the only memorandum I wished you to obtain from that gentleman was an assurance on his part to abstain from all angry correspondence concerning me either to myself personally, to my personal friends, or to the employés of the *Morning Post*. . . . You must please to bear in mind that my resignation is now tendered to Mr Fry in accordance with his peremptory command, and in my opinion contrary to the stipulation contained in my arrangement with Mr Crompton.

Thus the paper passed into the hands of Mr Crompton, who appointed Peter Borthwick to be his editor, and so initiated the association which remains to this day.



## CHAPTER II

### PETER BORTHWICK

WHEN Edmund, son of Edmund Ironside, returned from his exile in Hungary in the eleventh century, bringing his daughter Margaret, who was to become Queen of Scotland, there came in the family train one Bartuic. The name is found in Hungary to this day. The courtier appears to have gone north with Margaret and to have become Scotticised as Borthwick. Sir William Borthwick, who may reasonably be identified as his descendant, went into England as hostage for James I. when Henry V. allowed his prisoner to visit Scotland. Returning home, he received a grant of land and there built Borthwick Castle in Selkirkshire. It still stands in repair, but is no longer inhabited. His son was called to the House of Peers in the middle of the fifteenth century. The seventh Lord gave refuge to Queen Mary and Bothwell, and enabled them to escape from their pursuers, who surrounded the castle. The ninth Lord held it for King Charles and received the following summons :

*For the Governor of Borthwick Castle.*

SIR,—I thought fit to send this trumpett to you to let you know that if you please to walk away with your contents and deliver the house to such as I send to receive it you shall have libertie to carry off your arms and goods and such other



necessaries as you have. You harboured such parties in your house as have basely unhumanly murdered our men. If you necessitate me to bend my cannon against you, you must expect what I doubt you will not be pleased with. I expect your present answer and rest your servant, O. CROMWELL.<sup>1</sup>

A direct descendant of this man was Thomas Borthwick, whom Scott drew as Henry Morton in *Old Mortality*. Indirectly the Borthwicks were connected with another character in the Waverley Novels. Sir Algernon Borthwick at one time did some kindness to a kinswoman of whose existence he became aware. When she died he received this letter from another of his kindred: “. . . she had attained the age of 96 . . . . She remembered many incidents of the jubilee of George III.: she had seen George IV., William IV., and Queen Victoria. She had seen Sir Walter Scott in company with grandfather; she knew David Ritchie (The Black Dwarf) well and had many stories of him: by the way, her husband was a distant relation.” The peerage has not existed so long without a dispute as to succession; but the present Lord Borthwick is the seventeenth Baron.

It may easily be believed that during these generations the family threw out many branches. These it would be impossible, and it is not necessary, to trace: it stands to reason that their fortunes varied greatly. Many properties in the lowlands are known to have been owned by Borthwicks at different times: Thomas and John Borthwicks are to be found at all times and in all places. It may be supposed that most of the children of this race turned to husbandry as a profession, and it may be said that by heredity they were agriculturalists.

<sup>1</sup> He refused to surrender. The castle was besieged, but not taken.



Peter Borthwick was directly descended from Thomas, Scott's Henry Morton. There is some evidence to suggest that this branch of the family owned the lands of Greenlaw in the parish of Glencorse. Of his immediate parent we are not told very much, but of his character and influence we get some insight from a letter written by the son in 1836, in which he speaks of "the first agitating impulse produced by the sad tidings of my much respected father's death. It grieves me more than I can tell. If I have looked forward to success in my public career, or private, he has always been mixed up in what I intended to do, and now a stay is gone."

Peter Borthwick was born at Cornbank, in the parish of Borthwick, in Midlothian, on 13th September 1804. We have no means of ascertaining the influences and surroundings by which his childhood was affected. He was sent to school at Penicuik, after which he proceeded to the High School of Edinburgh, and so to Edinburgh University, where he graduated. Here he was a private pupil of Bishop Walker, from whom he derived a spirit of piety and affection towards the Scottish Episcopal Church. It is alleged that he contemplated taking orders, but this is unproved. It is more probable that he started in life conscious of his own abilities and resolved to seek a career outside the restricted limits of his home life. Whatever may have been his lack of worldly advantages, his portrait shows us that he must have had good looks in his favour, and, no doubt, he bore the stamp of intellect and character. It may be thanks to these that in 1827 he made a marriage, advantageous from every point of view. Of his bride, Margaret, daughter of John Colville of Ewart, in Northumberland, we shall learn something as we

go along. It is enough to say that the impression we gather of her, both as wife and mother, is entirely pleasant and to her credit. Their first child, a daughter, died in 1829.

Peter was now in residence at Cambridge, having decided, no doubt, that there was profit to be had both from continued study and from the importance then attached to membership of an English University. He is said to have been the author of some learned works on theological subjects. These the present writer has never seen; but his literary inclinations are sufficiently manifested by several bundles of manuscript consisting of dramas, farces, and lengthy poems. He wrote a tragedy entitled *Queen Anne Boleyn* and a serious historical play on the subject of Henry VI.; also a comedy in three acts, which is really a farce composed of situations and constructed by expedients long since banished from the stage. His view was, on the whole, serious, and he took infinite pains with his work, repeatedly revising and re-writing his manuscript.

In January 1849 he published a long poem in the *Morning Post* entitled "A New Bœotia," commencing with an invocation to the spirit of satire to awake. The following lines will suffice to give a specimen of his style and to reveal, at the same time, his animosity against Peel and all Protectionist apostates:

"Had Peel, sublime in some Lord Mayor's praise,  
Crushed the poor thought beneath the ponderous phrase,  
Following in place, as following in wit  
Elkanah Little,<sup>1</sup> and not William Pitt,

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<sup>1</sup> Satirised as Doeg by Dryden in *Absalom and Achitophel*. His poetry also received the damaging tribute of a couplet in the *Dunciad*:

"Now night descending, the bright scene is o'er,  
Or lives, like Settle's numbers, one day more."

Labour'd to serve the Muse, and not the time,  
And ne'er been false, excepting in a rhyme— . . . .  
Or Peel may change—if yet a change there be  
Untried by Peel—and sound a lower key . . . .  
Till his Bœotian herd, with clamorous roar,  
Howl for the cornfields they had spurned before ;  
Nor Satire's honest cudgel greet the snout  
Of e'er an erring brute in all the rout."

Having entered at Jesus College, he later became a Fellow Commoner at Downing, and it was at Cambridge in 1830 that his eldest son, Algernon, was born.

In 1832 an accident gave Borthwick his start in public life. He happened to attend a meeting called to demand the immediate suppression of slavery in the West Indies. Indignant at the exaggerated charges brought against the owners, he made an unpremeditated speech in their defence. So great a stir did this make that he was very soon engaged in what is now known as stumping the country. He was not only in great demand: his efforts were appreciated. Whether his expenses were paid or not, he was rewarded with many presents of plate; and in Edinburgh a silver bicker was given to the child Algernon, "in honour of his father." Nor was this all. He was encouraged to contest Evesham at the general election. He stood and was beaten. Two years later (1835) he stood again and was returned. Having gone so far he was not likely to rest content as a silent member. Like a wise man he took up special subjects. He was an ardent anti-Erastian, demanding a restitution of power and authority to Convocation in the Church; and later on he championed the cause of Don Carlos in Spain.

In his labour on behalf of the Carlists, as in general

politics, he was in alliance with the "Young England" party. Of these his most frequent correspondent was Lord John Manners, who speaks in one letter of "our little Cabinet." Other members for the occasion were Lord Ranelagh,<sup>1</sup> who acted as treasurer, and Alexander Baillie Cochrane.<sup>2</sup> It appears, however, that discord arose early in their ranks, and on 9th November 1849 we find Lord John writing as follows: "As soon as it becomes known that the 3 or 4 English gentlemen who took upon them to collect subscriptions for the Carlist cause could not work together but were compelled to break up their organisation after a few weeks' work, people will regard with distrust and derision any fresh efforts which may be made by so inharmonious and incompetent a body." Whether the cause of failure existed within or without, the fact remains that the movement was not destined to achieve much success.

To more practical effect he sought and secured the insertion of a clause in the new Poor Law Bill to prevent the separation of aged couples in the workhouse. At the general election of 1837 he was again elected; but on this occasion a petition, alleging bribery, was brought against him. One charge had reference to a snuff-box which he had presented to an elector—according to one version, his chairman; according to another, a personal friend and admitted opponent. So embittered was the controversy arising out of this affair that he actually was involved in a duel with the Hon. George Rushout, afterwards the last Lord Northwick. He was unseated, and the cost of fighting the petition, with the subsequent scrutiny, left his finances in lasting disorder. In 1841

<sup>1</sup> Died *s.p.* 1885.

<sup>2</sup> First Lord Lamington.

he was to be elected again free of all expense, and he sat in the House of Commons until 1847. In this year he visited Jamaica, where the Chamber of Commerce voted him a sum of money in recognition of his labours in Parliament on behalf of the colony: but he had seen the necessity of securing a reliable income; in his emergency he turned to the law and was called at Gray's Inn. Meanwhile he was fond of writing, and his thoughts turned instinctively to journalism. It is not known how and when he first became connected with the *Morning Post*, but it must have been some time before the change of management in 1849. This is made evident by the fact that before that date we find Lord Palmerston writing, "Nothing could be better than your manner of dealing with the news I sent you"; also by the fact that Mr Michele, then editor, writes to him in March 1849 of "the interest you have never ceased to take—on public as well as on private grounds—in the *Morning Post*." So it happened that when the new owner had to reorganise the office he found an editor ready to his hand. Of his labours there we shall learn something from his correspondence with his son.

In 1851 Peter Borthwick again contemplated entering Parliament, as the following letters prove. No other record of the episode is forthcoming. It shows us that for once at all events his public spirit ran away with his prudence. We shall learn that at this time he was seriously troubled about his private affairs, and he must have had some warnings of the physical collapse which was very soon to befall him and hurry him to his death. He was working with all his might to mend the fortunes of the *Post*, and it would have been a most reckless

proceeding to incur the additional expense and labour of a constituency and parliamentary life in such circumstances.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

*July 15, 1851.*

Harwich is vacant. Your dear papa goes down to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock. I believe the election will be in the beginning of next week. There will be no opposition to *him*, so I suppose he will be M.P. in due course of time. God grant it may be for his own good. . . . Lord P. is all for it. . . . Prinsep has given it up. . . . I pray God that his health may not be injured by the additional labour.

*Thursday.*

. . . . Matters have assumed a new aspect, for Mr Bankes has presented a petition to enquire into the conduct of the Government at the last Harwich election. . . . The result is that the writ is delayed. The allegation against the Govt. is that they ordered a vessel out of Port Harwich to prevent some of the crew voting for Mr Prinsep. The Govt. in this only pursued the usual course on such occasions to prevent smuggling which would take place if the Govt. vessel was known to remain in harbour for any purpose of the kind. . . . Your papa is greatly harassed.

*Monday.*

Nothing more has transpired about Harwich. Your papa thinks the probability is that no writ will be issued for it after so many petitions from it for bribery and corruption.

Nothing more did "transpire." Harwich was not disfranchised, but when the writ was issued next year, Peter Borthwick was not a candidate. Perhaps he had had leisure to repent and had appreciated the risk he was undertaking.

At one time certainly Borthwick turned his thoughts to a refuge in the diplomatic service, as the following letter will show.









*Engraved by J. H. P.*

*Mrs. Peter Borthwick*



*Peter Borthwick to Lord Aberdeen.*

CARLTON CLUB,  
Oct. 10, 1843.

MY LORD,—Having made application through Sir Thomas Fremantle and Sir Robert Peel to be appointed to one of the several vacancies which have recently occurred in the diplomatic service, and understanding that such application has been accordingly presented to your Lordship, I trust that the importance to me of the subject itself and the suggestion of Sir Robert Peel to that effect will be deemed a sufficient apology for the liberty which I now take in addressing you directly. I have pointed out the office of Consul-General at Bogota, lately held by Mr Robert Stewart, and as this appointment is not likely to excite any very eager or numerous competition, I am induced to hope that I shall not solicit for it thus anxiously and in vain.

For twelve years and in three Parliaments I have supported by my utmost exertions and by no common sacrifices the great cause of Conservative policy. As some proof that my endeavours in this behalf have not been without success, I may state that to two of the Parliaments referred to, my constituents through kindness to me returned me a Conservative colleague and that I was elected to my present seat against a most formidable opposition during my absence from England and without the possibility of any influence other than the spontaneous confidence of the electors. There was even no pledge. The power thus independently obtained and held, has been ever employed by me in the faithful support of Conservative principles, and the sacrifices which I have made in this respect form the sole cause of an application the result of which I now leave in your Lordship's hands.—I have the honour to be, my Lord, your most faithful and humble servant,

P. BORTHWICK.

THE RIGHT HONBLE.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN.

Whether this application was refused or whether Borthwick changed his mind is not evident; but he fell back upon the law. Three years later we find him

petitioning the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, showing that he had been admitted a member on the 26th of January 1838, and that having kept his commons and paid his fees he was desirous of being admitted to the Bar. He understands that objections have been raised against his admission; he declares that his conduct will bear the strictest investigation, and he demands information with the right of full hearing in reply. The objections, if they ever existed, were satisfactorily met, and he was duly admitted.

One other episode which occurred before he left Parliament may be noted. It was not the good fortune of Peter Borthwick to win from Queen Victoria the approval and favour which were to be enjoyed by his son half a century later. In February 1845 a paragraph appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* encouraging the report that the title of King Consort was to be conferred on Prince Albert. Peter Borthwick asked a question in the House, and Sir Robert Peel was able to give a positive denial. But her Majesty was annoyed. "The Queen was much hurt," we read,<sup>1</sup> "at Mr Borthwick's most impertinent manner of putting the question with respect to the title of King Consort, and much satisfied with Sir Robert's answer."

No doubt his most memorable achievement in politics was his championship of the cause of the proprietors in Jamaica: if he had not made a great name and position in Parliament he had at all events led a vigorous and varied political life; but he is principally interesting to us, and is undoubtedly best remembered, as the editor of the *Morning Post* at a critical period of its career.

It will be convenient here to account for the other

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria*, ii. 34.

children of Peter Borthwick. There were three sons: Christopher (1834), Thomas George (1836), George Colville (1839), and a daughter, Harriet.

Thomas died early. George entered into the service of the Sultan of Turkey, where he rose to the rank of Major-General in the army. His letters show that he possessed ability and determination, and that he was naturally inclined towards a life of action. In 1884 he married Sophie Schylowskaïa, daughter of an officer in the Russian Imperial Guard, who survives him. He died in 1896, leaving a son and a daughter.

Christopher appears to have been one of those of whom it is said that they are nobody's enemy but their own; unfortunately his self-inflicted damage ruined his career. He was not without genius, and one is attracted even by his eccentricity and waywardness. His short life was crowded with sensation. His first adventure was a voyage on a brig: the ship was wrecked, and Christopher was one of the few who escaped. His father then obtained for him a nomination for the Royal Navy, and by the favour of Admiral Dundas he was appointed to the flagship in the Mediterranean. Family letters make it abundantly clear that in financial matters he was incorrigible: nothing would induce him to see the necessity of living within his means. Finding himself in an embarrassed condition, he thought proper to exchange services and enlist in the army. His brother, their father being dead, bought his discharge, and secured his reinstatement in the navy. So clever was he that he found no difficulty in passing for promotion two years sooner than regulations required; and in due course he was appointed to the "Sans Pareil" for service in the Crimea. To his adventurous spirit,

however, this prospect, for a junior officer, seemed comparatively tame, and he preferred the idea of joining the "Sappho" for a slave-raiding cruise on the coast of Africa. He weaved into this commission all that the most vivid imagination could suggest, and enjoyed something of the glamour of nautical melodrama. The stern element of discipline, however, disturbed these dreams. There was an altercation with a superior officer, and he was landed at Lagos to be tried by court-martial. This was so little to his taste that he solved the difficulty by escaping and returning to England. It was a serious dilemma for the brother. Christopher was in fact a deserter, and for some time he was actually concealed at home. The fear of arrest weighed heavily on the minds of the mother and brother, at all events. Then, by a curious turn of fortune, they learnt that the "Sappho" had been lost with all lives and all records. There remained no evidence against Christopher, but it was manifestly impossible for his brother to explain the circumstances to the Admiralty, and there was an end of his career in the navy.

He next entered the service of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and sailed for India. When he got there he found the Mutiny in full blast; upon which he immediately left his ship and joined a mounted force of irregulars, with whom he fought gallantly. Lord Canning had been a friend of Peter Borthwick's, and when peace was restored he gave the young adventurer an appointment in connection with the police. An unpardonable act of eccentricity very soon lost him this post, and the Viceroy in a letter to the brother declares that he can do nothing more for him. Having thwarted his prospects in India, Christopher turned his

attentions to Australia, where he contrived to make a livelihood until the outbreak of the Maori War in New Zealand. Thither he hastened, and once more took the field. Whatever mistakes he may have made in life, his death, at least, was to bring him credit, for here he died campaigning in October 1865, being then but thirty-one years old. He gave constant anxiety to his parents and added not a little to Algernon's cares when he became the head of the family ; but it is evident that they loved him all the time, and one cannot help feeling that, in spite of all he did, he remained lovable to the end.

Harriet Borthwick never married. She was entirely devoted to her brother and gloried in his success. She died in 1907, and is well and affectionately remembered by everyone who was ever Lord Glenesk's guest in Scotland, in London, or at Cannes.

## CHAPTER III

PARIS, 1850-1852

OF Algernon's childhood not many memorials exist. We have seen that he had an early insight into political life, inasmuch as he accompanied his father upon his tour of speaking upon the question of slavery in the West Indies, though it is not to be supposed that he can have held any reasoned opinions of his own, or have shared his father's enthusiasm. That he cherished private enthusiasms is made evident by the following letter, written many years later, on the occasion of buying a necklace which had been given by Mary Queen of Scots to Mary Seton :

I have always taken the deepest interest in Queen Mary, and as a boy, in my enthusiasm, I prayed for her soul every night. She was sheltered by my forbears at Borthwick Castle in the days of her trouble, and we lost lives for her and for the Stuarts after her. Her room is still there, whence she escaped disguised as a page.

He was fully alive to the charm of ancient descent, and he was frankly proud of his Borthwick ancestry.

As soon as he was capable of forming any predilections and developing any traits of character, he came under his father's careful supervision ; although the first of these letters implies that at the age of six his education was in an unusually elementary state.



## Lord Glenesk and the "Morning Post" 49

THE CARLTON CLUB,  
February 23, 1836.

MY DEAR ALGY,—I write to thank you for your kind letters. It always makes me happy to hear from you. I hope soon to hear that you have got some young lady or some clergyman to teach you to read, so that you may derive amusement and instruction from the productions of those great men who have committed their wisdom to print.

I trust that you will one day follow the examples of some of the greatest and best of them, and so make us all very happy.—God bless you. Your affectionate father,

P. BORTHWICK.

Again:

I hope to hear soon or find when I come home that you have gone to school and are prospering in all useful learning, so that you may become a great and good man. A great man means a good man.

Algernon was for some time at school in France, where he acquired the complete facility in speaking and writing French which was to prove an invaluable asset throughout life. Later on he was sent to King's College School in London,<sup>1</sup> but he did not go through the intellectual exercise of what is called a University education, as his father had done at Cambridge. He evidently selected, from amongst the various interests to which his father had paid attention, the career of diplomacy. The following letter from his friend M. Marcellin de Lhuys is undated, but it was presumably written before he was installed as editor of the *Morning Post* in 1852:—

Et vous, mon cher Algernon, qu'est ce que vous faites maintenant? Etes vous entré au foreign office comme vous le desiriez?

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<sup>1</sup> A copybook has been preserved containing a series of original poems very neatly written and usually marked by his master "very good" or "very well."

Peter Borthwick had found his own efforts to enter diplomacy unavailing; and it is clear that there was need for Algernon to find employment and earn an income without delay. The staff of the *Post* afforded the readiest and most convenient opening, and there the father would be able to exercise guidance and control. He must have had confidence in his son or he would not have dared, for his own credit, to entrust to him the important post of Paris correspondent at the age of twenty.<sup>1</sup> Yet this was his intention.

The first record of correspondence between Algernon in Paris and his father in London is dated 23rd March 1850. The formal agreement confirming the appointment is given here, with the date of 25th September. It may easily be believed that in the case of one so young and inexperienced a period of probation was considered advisable.

MEMORANDUM OF AN AGREEMENT made this twenty-fifth day of September 1850: Between ALGENON (*sic*) BORTHWICK, Esquire of the one part and Peter Borthwick of the *Morning Post* Office, Wellington Street North, in the County of Middlesex on behalf of the Proprietor of the said *Morning Post* of the other part.

The said Algenon Borthwick in consideration of the sum of four Pounds four shillings to be paid weekly and every week for and during a period of six months certain and to continue until one month's notice shall be given by either party hereby agrees with the said Peter Borthwick to employ himself in the service of the *Morning Post* daily Newspaper as Paris Correspondent, and in all matters and concerns accustomed and relating thereto, and to perform all such other duties and to fulfil all directions and requests of the said Peter Borthwick and the Editor for the time being as relate thereto.

The said Peter Borthwick for and on behalf of the said Proprietor for the considerations aforesaid hereby agrees with

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<sup>1</sup> To be exact, nineteen years and nine months.

the said Algenon Borthwick to pay or cause to be paid unto the said Algenon Borthwick weekly and every week during the said time of occupation, the said sum of four Pounds four shillings in the usual and regular mode of payment. As witness the parties the day and year first above written.

PETER BORTHWICK.

*Witness,* Thomas Barton.

From the moment of his arrival in Paris, Algernon commenced a series of letters which give an insight both into his private affairs, also into the status and circumstances of the *Morning Post* at that time. It is significant of the financial situation that the salary attached to the Paris appointment was no higher than £4, 4s. The author of *The Fourth Estate* gives an estimate of the expenses of a daily newspaper in 1850. He allows £4, 4s. for correspondents at Madrid and Rome ; for Paris, £10, 10s.

Peter Borthwick must have recognised the fact that if Algernon was fit for the post, he was entitled to an appropriate salary: we may take this then as one of several indications that the strictest economy was required in every department.

Algernon from the outset formed his own opinions and expressed them fearlessly:—

. . . . I cannot yet, in my own opinion, decide whether Lord Palmerston be right or wrong in not recalling Lord Normanby.<sup>1</sup> At first sight one fears it may render the French Government impudent and tend to lessen our dignity. Yet no one can say that Palmerston in letting Normanby remain "*cherche querelle*," and if he remain it is possible the French

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<sup>1</sup> The French and British Governments had entered into an agreement for dealing with the Greek Government concerning matters with which the famous Don Pacifico was connected. Through mismanagement or misunderstanding, the French Government considered that they had been deceived, and recalled their minister, Drouyn de Lhuys, from London. Lord Palmerston pretended that he had only gone home to elucidate matters, and did not recall Lord Normanby.

Government may see the folly of their ways and send back Drouyn de Lhuys. The clique at present in power thought to gain two objects—one, to oust Palmerston from office; the other, to pass as unobserved as possible their Electoral Law. They are gaining the latter. The *Débats* and most of the Conservative papers here are furious against Palmerston. They call him brouillon, insolent, and a host of hard names. The Constitutionnel (semi-official) is conciliatory, and the Presse and National (Democ. Soc.) defend him. Louis Napoleon himself I believe is *désolé*.

Frenchmen are indeed very mad men. Many here believe that in consequence of the present misunderstanding, Palmerston will be sending money to organise the Socialist Insurrections. Their conceit, too, passes all bounds—a very distinguished and sensible Frenchman told me, with every appearance of conviction, that in the event of a war, their Marine would lick ours. He admitted that they were inferior in force, but contended that they were superior in courage and as sailors. Now after that can you be surprised at anything a Frenchman may say?

There is no reason to apprehend an émeute here—there is plenty talk but no go among the Rouges—for the moment.

*Algernon Borthwick to Mr Barton.*

May 19, 1850.

Pray have the goodness to send a *Post* daily to the Hon. R. Edwardes, Ambassade d'Angleterre. . . .

The admirable article of the *Post* will appear at full length in to-morrow's *Galignani*. Pray tell this to my father. It is most excellent, and the highest authorities say that it is calculated to produce a most beneficial effect on the French Government. . . .

What a day for fishing!

Wednesday morning,

May 22, 1850.

*Private.*—I have been working with Edwardes all night and left him at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past three this morning, that is, I left his apartments, but as to leaving the Embassy—that is quite another thing. I'm writing this note from Lord William Hervey's sitting-room, where I have had a very comfortable snooze on

his Lordship's sofa—having forced my way in here, after vain attempts to rouse the concierge. It is now about 6 or  $\frac{1}{2}$  past. I snore, and I shall be off to my hotel and post this.

C'est rentrer de bonne heure. I hope the concierge has not sat up all night for me, and I hope he has not yet posted off to the Morgue.

A Messenger comes from England to-day who probably brings Palmerston's letter for N.

Pray ask Mamma, with my love, what she wishes brought to her—a parasol? or what?

It is very ludicrous having been prisoner here all night.

Well, I'm off for a bath to begin with—I've also a fameux appétit. God bless you.—Your affectionate son,

ALGERNON BORTHWICK.

Next in order of date come two letters from the proprietor to his editor, which show that whilst young Algernon was rejoicing in the novelty and excitement of his work, the father's position at home was beset with anxiety. The first letter is noteworthy as one of a long series of indications that the *Morning Post* has at all periods and through all phases supported such policies as Protection, Fair Trade, or Tariff Reform, in opposition to the uncompromising advocates of Free Trade.

The second letter calls attention to the uncomfortable condition of the paper's finances, and prepares us for the strict and close economy which characterises the father's instructions and the son's conduct :—

*T. B. Crompton to Peter Borthwick.*

*June 6, 1850.*

Men are discovering that Free Trade with reciprocity won't do. You will be all right before next session of Parliament, but as I remarked when last in town, the working class in the manufacturing districts are well off and we cannot treat them with rashness. Only have a little patience and the *M.P.* will be all right in sentiment.

*T. B. Crompton to Peter Borthwick.*

July 12, 1850.

I wish we may be able to show ere long that the *Post* can support itself, of which I see no chance but by a serious reduction in expenditure. Increased income is not so easy to obtain as you were sanguine enough to suppose.

Algernon evidently came back for a while in the summer and returned to take up his post officially in September. There is a touching interest in this note from his mother, a loving and devoted woman, who fully recognised the value of a good son, and was not without a premonition of the succour he was to bring to her in the day of affliction and sore need:—

. . . It seems very still without you, though you were little at home: still it was pleasant to see you come in about this time, six. When you are absent I feel as if I had lost a prop, and so does your dear Papa. We both look to you as our home comfort and blessing, are you not, my dear Algy? Yes, my dear boy, you have ever been in the midst of all the trials which it has pleased God to send us. . . . George has gone to school: poor boy, I hope he will get on well: he has had many drawbacks.

*From Algernon to Mrs Borthwick.*

Oct. 19, 1850.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I send you part of to-day's *Galignani*, in which you will be pleased to see one of my letters inserted as first leader. I was quite surprised on taking up the paper this morning to find myself figuring in so honourable a position. . . . I am getting on very well indeed and forming opinions and making the acquaintance of men and things, so that when the times of action come, I shall be quite ready to judge and render account. . . . A letter has just come in from the President's Secretary who wants to see me at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 11 to-morrow—so no church.



*Algernon to Harriet Borthwick.*

. . . . I am not forgetting you and will send you home some charms by the first opportunity. . . . The French like novelty, and the proprietors of the hippodrome find that they cannot get people to come to their exhibition unless they have constantly some new change. Just now their wonder is 4 ostriches which, mounted by boys like Georgy, run races. Last Thursday, a man went up riding on an ostrich attached to a balloon. I dare say you cannot imagine anything so ridiculous, but if you ever come to Paris you will see a great many things still more so.

On 2nd October Peter Borthwick writes: "The letters you send us are sensible and good. You might be a little more disquisitory upon occasion." And on the 7th: "The news (exclusive) which you sent us was very well done, and your dispatches are good." On the 22nd: "I am very much gratified with your correspondence. Your style is improving—and it is gentlemanlike. It is right that you should know that everybody is pleased." Finally, on 7th Nov. he writes: "Your letters are warmly applauded by P[almerston]."

This may well have been gratifying to Algernon, for he had received encouragement which was not wholly convincing and unreserved from his mother on the 11th:—

26 GROVE PLACE,  
Oct. 11, 1850.

Your Papa is in better spirits. I think he is very much pleased with you though he does not say much.

So careful is Algernon in his expenses that he will not even take in a newspaper which he can rely upon seeing at the Embassy:—"I will avoid every expense I can. I keep my accounts very accurately. I have two books; in one I enter my expenses, in the other the *Post's*."

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon Borthwick.*

M.P.O., Thursday, Nov. 7, 1850.

MY DEAR ALGY,—Your account was very clearly and admirably kept, so pray go on with the other in the same methodical and accurate way. As to the saving, we shall be better able to judge by the present month when it comes in.

Everybody here is agog upon the matter of the Pope. Lord John Russell has addressed a letter to the Bishop of Durham which is published in our second edition of this day and which you will have sent to you by this post.

The Government and the Queen are very strong.

I had a very interesting and long conversation with P[almerston] last night. As we have always said, Prussia and Austria will not fight—they have never dared or perhaps even meant, in fact they cannot.<sup>1</sup>

If you could see the President or anyone in confidence or Normanby—we think we might do harm to the President if we wounded the *amour propre* of the French by taking too strong a part in the domestic struggle by condemning Changarnier. Will you let me know how this is?

Your letters are warmly applauded by P.

I shall have the boy waiting for specialties at the railway whenever you tell me. In great haste.—Your affectionate father,

P. B.

I see Rachel has come back. Tell her I wrote to her through Murray at Vienna. He told me he had sent her the letter, but I had not any answer.

In connection with this postscript it may be observed that a friendship of long standing existed between the Borthwicks and Madame Rachel, and that she was frequently indebted to both father and son for advice and assistance in England.

<sup>1</sup> The claim to interfere in Hesse Cassel, where internal disorder existed, caused friction between the two Governments. A solution was found at a conference held at Olmutz at the end of November.



The "matter of the Pope" refers of course to the appointment of the Anglican bishops, which was met by hesitating and futile action on the part of the Government. This is now best remembered by the famous cartoon in *Punch* where Lord John Russell writes "No Popery" on a wall, and immediately runs away.

General Changarnier was commander of the National Guard of Paris. He resolutely opposed the policy of the President and was dismissed from his post in consequence. He was one of those arrested when the coup d'état came in December 1851.

Mr Crompton does not appear to have interested himself in the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, but Mr Fry, who supplied any deficiency in care for the paper of which his chief might be guilty, wrote to the editor two stirring letters. A little later Algernon sent to him from Paris a confidential memorandum from an American gentleman, who professed to have secret information, and Mr Fry was asked to believe that the Papal appointments had their origin in affairs of State rather than the pretensions of a Church.

*A. A. Fry to Peter Borthwick.*

*Oct. 31, 1850.*

Would it not be something conferring originality upon the *M. Post* contributing to the anti-papal indoctrination of the people if you were to reprint the Bull by which the Holy Father of that day excommunicated Elizabeth in 1588?

To stir up the smouldering embers of religious animosity would not be the act of a friend unless in self defence but . . . that the cherished design is to overturn English institutions cannot be doubted after the intimations of the last Bull coupled with the language of Romish writers and the machinations of Romish priests.

*A. A. Fry to Peter Borthwick.*

Oct. 30, 1850.

I see that Historicus<sup>1</sup> has been hustled out of the *M. Post* by Police Intelligence. . . . The people are marshalling themselves into petitioning rank and file. It is desirable that they should have a Flugelman (*sic*) and I should be glad to find the *Morning Post* elected by the people to that post of honour.

*An American View.*

I have this upon authority I may quote when the occasion comes—that the poor Pope, who is nearly worried to death, was forced by the diplomacy of the Holy Alliance to publish his Bull setting up the Catholic Hierarchy in England. It was meant as a firebrand to throw the country into confusion, and its whole scope and purpose was to break up the ministry of which Lord Palmerston was a member. The members of the Holy Alliance<sup>2</sup> are straining heaven and earth to get that ‘horrid revolutionist’ out of power. . . . The Pope, Austria, and Russia meant that Cardinal Wiseman should rule the foreign policy of England instead of Lord Palmerston. . . . He would get on swimmingly enough with Lord Aberdeen.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

. . . . Your article of Tuesday is without exception the most admirable that has appeared on the subject in any paper French or English. Your article of to-day is “nothing particular.” . . . I am to see the President in a day or two. . . . I have seen Mitchel . . . he wishes to bring Fanny Kemble here. . . . He is very grateful to you for having built her up so great a fame in London. With regard to Rachel . . . he doubts whether it would be wise for him to take Drury : he doubts whether the speculation would answer.

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<sup>1</sup> This must not be confused with the letters which Sir William Harcourt wrote over the same signature to the *Times* some years later. They were collected and published in 1864. It would be interesting to find that the writer refers to early contributions from the same source, but it cannot be proved.

<sup>2</sup> Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

Wednesday.

Rachel is very much engaged—rehearsals of her new rôle "Valerie" every day, playing often, and always full of engagements—so she said, when I asked her when I should breakfast with her again. So I said, "I won't come to you for a week then." "Very well: *vous serez bien gentil*." . . . I believe she is excellent herself. . . . She is a wonderful creature.

Nov. 1850.

The *Post* is quoted constantly now in *Galignani* and hardly one of the important French papers but what has daily some extract or another from it. The other night after Lady Normanby's party I was there with Douglas, Hay, Spencer Cowper, Orme, Errington, etc. Lady N. was very civil to me. I don't go to see Lord N. much: in fact I don't think he would be much use. . . .<sup>1</sup>

. . . . Now I daresay you will like to know something about money. I have subscribed to *Galignani* for three months, 28fcs., and to Havas 150 per mo. At present I see some papers at the Embassy and buy others, but the reading-room plan is quite out of the question. Thus:

I subscribe and read the papers. Mark in my book to buy National, Presse, Débats, Constitutionnel, Assemblée, Corsaire, etc. etc. And I go to the corners of the streets to the old man or woman as the case may be. "Give me the Presse."—"Mais, Monsieur, il est défendu de le vendre dans les rues—il faut aller aux Bureaux."—"Where's that?" (In the city perhaps.) "Give me the National." Same answer. Bureaux in quite another quarter. "Give me the Constitutionnel." All sold.

That I think will show you the impossibility of the plan for a person so pressed, so hot pressed, for time as the Paris correspondent. Well, about expenses:—

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Normanby was considered by H.M. Government to have been in Paris sufficiently long. He resigned a year later and was succeeded by Lord Cowley (*Life of Lord Granville*, by Lord E. Fitzmaurice, i. 54).

	Fs.
Havas, Foreign News . . . . .	150
Postage about (because presently two de- spatches) . . . . .	80
Cabs . . . . .	40
Stationery . . . . .	10
Commissions and diners . . . . .	20
	<hr/>
	300
Now to this must be added <i>Galignani</i> divided into months . . . . .	10
And about 120 by the quarter for French papers which I shall be obliged I think to subscribe to . . . . .	40
	<hr/>
	25 350
Per month . . . . .	£14
Is, I have no hesitation in saying, the outside of what I shall spend . . . . .	13 <sup>1</sup>
Annual expense . . . . .	£182

Now this I hope to contract considerably—but I know that I ought not to spend, at the outside, more than £200 in the course of the year. In round numbers 400 Guineas a year will with me amply cover the whole expense of your Paris establishment. I shall like very much to know what you think of this and also whether I am making any considerable saving, or whether this is the same rate it was done at before—cheaper I think it could not be.

With regard to my personal expenditure :—

Lodging . . . . .	120
Breakfast . . . . .	50
Dinner . . . . .	100
	<hr/>
	270
Fires I should think . . . . .	60
	<hr/>
	330
Income <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	450
Less . . . . .	330
	<hr/>
Leaves me . . . . .	120 Fcs.

per month for all other expenses.

<sup>1</sup> He seems to allow a "baker's dozen" of months to the year.

<sup>2</sup> The stipulated £4, 4s. a week would give 455 francs a month.

I shall get on well I have no doubt, and if I can write a play or some papers for Bentley or Colburn, or something of that kind, I shall be as rich as a king. If I get good news from home I shall be as merry as one. I get up early, find business habits suit me, am punctual, like my work extremely and have no doubt I shall give great satisfaction when I am in proper condition and accustomed to my work. With my information of probabilities and certainties for the future and of present situations and past events at my fingers' ends—with my perceptions accurately and truthfully conveyed to you—I hope to be worth my salt. By the meeting of the Chambers I think I shall be in a fair way of success. In the meantime be kind to my deficiencies.

With many apologies for the roughness of this sketch of my position and prospects, and with prayers for instruction and enquiry, I am, my dear father, your affectionate son,

ALGERNON BORTHWICK.

*PS.*—I would rather you sent the *1st* than the *2nd* Edition of the *Post* to me.

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.*

*Nov. 27, 1850.*

I have not a moment to write to Rachel in French. . . . I have not neglected her interests, for I have been in correspondence with Lord Glengall about Drury Lane. . . . Tell her I would have written all this to herself if I could write French as you do. Give her my homage of a faithful and an unchangeable friendship.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

*Nov. 28, 1850.*

. . . . If I had known in time I might have looked up somebody who could have given you a boar hunt or something worth your while to travel to a distance for. The shooting near Paris is all used up . . . . Galignani offered me a day's shooting, but his . . . . is really as bad as the Epping Hunt. . . . Drouyn de Lhuys<sup>1</sup> showed your two last letters to

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<sup>1</sup> He had been Foreign Minister and for a short time French Minister in London. He was to become Foreign Minister again later.

me to the President. He was infinitely pleased with them. . . . I bless God for good news from home. Best love to all at home. . . . I intend to walk into the *Times* again.

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.*

*Dec. 9, 1850.*

I have only time to enclose an English letter to Rachel. Will you take and read it to her? I prefer your reading it to anyone else.

*Dec. 10.*

One word about *the* telegraphic despatch. . . . I printed it because it accorded with what P[almerston] had led me to expect. We had it exclusively, and it has raised us 50 per cent. in the City. . . . You have earned great laurels. P. was quite delighted. He said he wished you would bite the Embassy and give them some youthful impetuosity. . . . I shall write to you and Rachel to-morrow.

*Dec. 17.*

I am happy to tell you that Mr Crompton says he never until now was convinced of the certainty of success. . . . He says that the last two months are better than any two months since he knew the *Post*.

PARIS,

*Wednesday (Dec. 1850).*

MY DEAR FATHER,—I have been grievously disappointed to-day.

A Special Train left Paris for Boulogne this morning at 11.40 (this occurs but twice a month) and would have brought de Tocqueville's Report to the *M.P.* at midnight. You would have had it in the first edition; the other papers *all* could not have had it but in the second.

A French Ass refused to receive the despatch because it was not of the usual course of affairs, and he was in the habit of only receiving them in the evening.

The consequence is, I am disappointed, and the *M.P.* instead of being some hours in advance will probably be later by two or three than the other papers. C'est un petit malheur! I have written to Boulogne to Barnard about it, and expect, together with the most abject apologies, the greatest attention for the future.

Pray tell Barton that I have received the Papers safely and also the money.

I intended to have written at some length to you, but the Boulogne affair has bothered me, and so I will put it off till to-morrow or next day.

*Has* bothered me, for it is past, thanks to my "take-it-easy" nature, which I believe is the chief cause of my success here—and speaking of that I cannot help telling you of the most flattering appreciation of my accuracy and activity that I have yet received. The *Daily News* man has begged me to do for the *Daily News* the evening work as regards Telegraphs, etc., etc. "He would place himself entirely in my hands. He would be glad to come to any arrangement." I refused distinctly, because I did not care to have another man's fortune in my hands, for if I made any mistake it is evident that he would be discharged and I should be responsible to him for his discharge. However, I felt immensely flattered by it, as he is, without doubt, the most active of the Correspondents here.

I should tell you that I am every evening at Fortoni's on the Boulevard for the evening papers, at 8 to  $\frac{1}{2}$  past. I see them and if there is anything I send it off by Telegraph. Generally there is nothing.

Now, as I have often told you, it is all play here, play to me, to call on some old fogey of a Politician at nine in the morning, to run about, to write at 11, to run about again, to write from  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 3 to  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 6 or 7, to snatch a dinner, or to go without till after the evening papers are out; perhaps to go down to the Ministry at 9, to send a telegraph, etc., etc.

All this is just as much play to me as fishing or riding or anything else I may take an interest in, but it is very different to men of 40 and 50 years of age, of settled habits, who have been accustomed to the old routine of years gone by. They have now no holiday, no rest, no cessation of what is to them boring and dull work, which kills them as they puff and blow over it with their "assistants," their servants, and other such help.

Pray do not mention about — to anyone as it might get him into disgrace. Of course he meant it to be strictly private and I should not forgive myself if his employers heard of it.

Pray tell Mamma I have received the poplin dress safely.

I have a long story to tell you about Cerito.



M.P.O., *Sunday night*,  
*Jan. 1, 1851.*

MY DEAREST ALGY,—I snatch just a moment to say that I believe I have many questions from you to answer—and that I do not at the moment remember half of them. I shall in a week or thereabouts give you details of the excessive and excessively extra labour which I have had to undergo.

First I wish you every blessing which Heaven can bestow, and I tell you that I feel proud in saying that as far as mortals can, you do deserve them. I wish you also a long succession of happy birthdays and happy new years. All are well at home. Of Kit we have no news.

About advertisements—your plan is admirable—I read your letter to Crompton, who was delighted. He spoke in high terms of you. Pray go on to deserve it. When Mrs Crompton saw your picture she showed it to Woolmer and others and said, “That is our good boy.”

Is it possible to get our Dresden news direct by any means? At present our date is a day later always than the *Times*.

Rachel has placed me in a very disagreeable dilemma by not writing. . . . She never writes.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

*Jan. 8, 1851.*

Your Papa . . . . is in good spirits, for the last quarter shows a balance in favour of £250. This is the first time there has been a favourable balance, since Mr Crompton had anything to do with the *Post*. He told me your communications to . . . . were published in the *Post* one entire day before any of the other papers. He said this was excellent. . . . Mr Crompton when speaking to the new printers said that Mr Borthwick would soon be his successor in the *Post*.

*T. B. Crompton to Peter Borthwick.*

*Jan. 8, 1851.*

I applied at the Electric Telegraph Office to send you a message, but the clerks said they were not in communication just then with London, and how soon they would be was uncertain. . . .



I am devoting a most inconvenient portion of my time to the repeal of the tax on paper . . . we were determined not to have paper mixed up with taxes on knowledge.

The staff leaves Glasgow on Thursday (to-morrow) . . . Depend upon it such a lesson taught to a set of unprincipled fellows cannot fail to create a great sensation and, for a time, doubt on the minds of many who is right. We must anticipate what they are likely to do and particularly with the Press as far as possible.

This letter gives a curious illustration of the elementary stage to which the use of the telegraph was restricted in the middle of the last century; and it may be noted in passing that the late Lord Ampthill was the first person to substitute the word telegram for telegraphic message.

Mr Crompton was only concerned in getting the tax on paper removed as a commercial boon: he did not wish to damage his interests by becoming involved in discussions on the stamp duty upon newspapers and taxes on advertisements.<sup>1</sup>

The last paragraph refers to strike troubles in the office. The printers had been dismissed and an emergency staff sent down from Scotland. Not long afterwards Mr Fry reports a conversation which he has had with one of the strikers.

<sup>1</sup> In the previous year, Peter Borthwick had written this letter to Mr Disraeli:—

*Apr. 15, 1850.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I am requested by Mr Crompton to express his gratification with the readiness and kindness of your attention to the substance of the request which I preferred to you on Saturday. . . . One word from you in the House will be esteemed a very great favour. The advertisement duty and the penny stamp on papers we have no wish to disturb. . . . For one labourer who by the repeal of the duty on bricks will find employment, there cannot be a doubt that at least fifty would be so advantaged by the removal of this excise. . . .—I have the honour to be, your most faithful servant,

PETER BORTHWICK.

B. DISRAELI, Esq., M.P.

*A. A. Fry to Peter Borthwick.*

*Mar. 8, 1851.*

" . . . Why I thought perhaps with such bad getting up of the paper Mr Borthwick would be glad to have the old hands back again."

I said rather sharply, "No, never: you will never be recalled as long as the world stands," and then I scolded him very severely for his foolish conduct in wasting the cash of the paper, occupying the time and thoughts of all concerned whether in property or in feeling, and bringing himself and the men under him to distressing circumstances by following the Union. . . .

*M.P.O., Jan. 20, 1851.*

MY DEAREST ALGY,—Well done! You have enabled us to be first with all the important news from France and from Spain. We have in every single instance been exclusive. It is doing immense good.

I have not had time to tell you that we have changed our printers—and so far vanquished the Union. Up to this moment everything in this respect is going on well. But it has required on my part the closest and most careful attention. I have been here every day since last Saturday week until the paper has been fairly printed and back again by 12 o'clock noon. You may imagine how completely I am worn to weariness.

You have never told me Rachel's answer to my letter. . . .

At the meeting of Parliament we shall have plenty of Pope and nothing else. I will give you some news on this and other English matters soon.

The President seems to be firm—firmness is success. Your article beginning "Magna est veritas," etc., is by far the best letter I ever saw. It is quite equal to Johnson. I mean the great Sam. It does you infinite honour and would do honour to the first statesman of Europe. This is P.'s opinion as well as mine.

PARIS,

*Tuesday, Jan. 1851.*

MY DEAR FATHER,—I don't know when I have been so much disappointed as I was this morning on opening yesterday's *Post* and finding in it no list of the New Spanish Ministry.

On Friday afternoon M. Havas saw the Duke de Sotomayer, who had just received the list of the new Ministers by the Gvt. Telegraph. Havas could not publish so soon and gave it to me. I sent on Friday evening two letters—one, the ordinary—and the other marked "Electrée Telegraph." I intended the latter to arrive in London at 7 o'clock on Saturday morning and to be printed in the *Post* at 8, so as to be in plenty time for the City and for quotation in the Sunday Papers.

The *Constitutionnel*, the Gvt. Organ, published the list on Sunday morning. I have no doubt the other correspondents telegraphed it to London in time for their Monday's paper. I did not send it on Sunday, of course, because I thought—I knew that it had appeared in London 24 hours before it appeared in Paris and 48 before it could appear in the *Times* or other papers.

You may imagine my consternation on looking at the *Post* and finding not a word on the matter, so that instead of being beforehand it is vice versâ and I suppose you have copied it for to-day's paper from the *Times*.

The letters were sent from here. Either the E.T.<sup>1</sup> despatch was lost by the Post Office, or Mr Gibbon lost it. An inquiry must be made. Shall I write to him or will Barton do so? I was so full of rejoicing Saturday and Sunday and Monday, thinking that I had "been and gone and done it"—but this morning destroyed all my illusions.

Please tell Mr Barton to send me one or two papers when the Leader I sent you appears. I shall write to him very soon.

I hope the Spanish news<sup>2</sup> was not kept out from distrust—I have made no mistakes yet, which is considerably more than the other correspondents can say.

What a stunning conspiracy!!! I hope I am first with it.

You may ask Anne if she will give a plate of vermicelli soup, a slice of salmon, caper sauce, a wing of chicken, water-cresses, a dish of strawberries and cream and sponge cakes, and half a bottle of wine, with bread, salt, pepper, etc., etc., service included, for two shillings. That is what I am going to dine on and what I am going to pay.

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<sup>1</sup> Electric Telegraph.

<sup>2</sup> The resignation of the Narvaez ministry, due, it was alleged, to the hostility of the Queen Mother Christina.

M.P.O., 5 A.M., Jan. 23.

MY DEAR ALGY,—Here I am, tired so much that I can hardly write.

I was surprised when I found your letter this morning—or rather when I read its contents. Your telegraphic account of the Spanish Ministry reached me duly on Saturday morning and was duly inserted as a 2nd edition at 10 o'clock. The usual express made the 3rd edition at 11.

By some unaccountable error of the new printers it was not copied into the Monday's edition, though both Mackintosh and I went carefully over it for re-correction—neither he nor I detected its absence until your letter informed us of it.

You will see, therefore, that you have all the honour and glory here which you thought you had missed.

Mackintosh desires me to say with no end of regards that he did not and I did not either dream of doubting your accuracy—indeed we rely on you much more certainly than on any other source, for we know that you have made no mistakes.

I am too sleepy and tired to say more, but if possible I will write again in the course of the day.

God bless you.

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.*

. . . We feel that the cause of human advancement is paramount to all other considerations and that the République Moderne is the exponent of that cause. The real and permanent interests of France are also the real and permanent interests of Europe. The causes of Order, of Peace—of the development of the resources of industry and commerce and art and intelligence—are all bound up in those interests. I am now speaking my own sentiments and I believe the sentiments of the People of England.

I have supported Lord Palmerston not only because he is by far the ablest of our Statesmen, but because his policy is identified with the progress of the great interests to which I have referred.

To the gentlemen, therefore, whom you are to meet I beg

you to present my most respectful and grateful homage, and to assure them of my willing co-operation in working out the great principles to which I have referred.

The post starts and I can only apologise for haste and confusion.

On 27th January 1851 William Rideout<sup>1</sup> writes to Algernon a very long and friendly letter full of sprightly gossip and containing a variety of news:—

Nasmyth has adapted his steam hammer to making dish covers at one blow. . . . The floating palaces are not so seaworthy as the celebrated Cunard liners, which come and go scarcely an hour after their time. There is not so much talk of the Great Exhibition as you would have expected. On the whole it is a failure in Lancashire, perhaps because manufacturers are very busy, and partly because we are a jealous lot about here, preferring our own gain to fame, more stability than vanity. The working classes are doing better than their employers, with abundance of labour and cheap food.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

Feb. 16, 1851.

Mr ——'s leader won't do. It calls Lord P. a great Liberal, which won't do just now. . . . You see what a small majority they had on Disraeli's motion. The Irishmen voted against the Ministers out of spite because Lord John is against the Pope.

Your Papa and I went to Lady Palmerston's last night. The Duke was there. . . . Lord Palmerston was very funny and jocular about the divisions of last week in the House. Monckton Milnes said he had seen you in Paris: 'you seem to be a great favourite with everybody. . . . Mackinnon told us that you dined at a large party at the Duke de Guiche's and that you had the seat of honour at the Duchess's right hand. . . . May you continue worthy the affectionate regard and estimation of all the good, my dear Algy. . . . Did your Papa

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Crompton's nephew and heir.

tell you that Mr Crompton had lent him six hundred pounds without interest? These miserable back debts always run away with so much. Still I hope we shall get on well, particularly now that the ledger of the *Post* is so much improved. . . . I have a letter from Kit . . . . he wants £10 . . . . he gives us no news.

*Algernon to Mrs Borthwick.*

Beg Papa to tell Charles Creed not to be so direct in his articles. There is the devil of a storm in the Assembly at the idea of violating the constitution; yet we coolly advised this course the other day—a course which is repudiated by the Assembly and every one save Bonapartists. . . . We are quite right, mind . . . . only we should scarcely advise a foreign assembly to take what is undoubtedly an unlawful though the best course. . . . Why is the *M.P.* like a chronometer? (please send this to *Punch*) Cos it regulates the *Times*. And it is right to do so, but although the *M.P.* attacks the *Times* on principle, still I think the attack should be confined to the leading columns. I do not like a musical critic who abuses another. Let the public judge between them.

*The Same to the Same.*

I dined last night with a lady 96 years old, an intimate friend of Louis Quinze. . . . Fancy a woman that was forty-five years old at the beginning of the century. She has bright eyes, a smooth skin, an excellent memory, and teeth that many a young woman might envy.

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.*

*Saturday, 22 Feb. 1851.*

MY DEAR ALGY,—Partly on account of the Papal Bill, and partly on account of the Budget, Lord John Russell has resigned and advised the Queen to accept his resignation.

The result will be, after trials by Stanley and by the Peelites respectively, to give us a new Russell Cabinet with Import Duties instead of Income Tax, and no Greys nor Radicals.



Another illustration of the *Post's* sanguine faith in a reaction against Free Trade.

Lord John Russell's resignation was the result of a hostile vote upon Mr Locke King's motion to equalise the borough and county franchise. Acting upon Lord John's advice the Queen sent for Lord Stanley<sup>1</sup>: he, however, declined to attempt the formation of a Government until other resources had been exhausted. By her Majesty's desire a meeting was held at the Palace between Lord John, Lord Aberdeen, and Sir James Graham, but a new combination of parties was found to be impracticable. Not less abortive were the overtures which reached Sir James Graham from the Conservative party. He, indeed, was in the sad predicament of receiving solicitations from all sides and finding himself able to accept none of them.<sup>2</sup>

In the following September Lord John approached him again, and again met with a refusal, as the following extracts show:—

*Lord John's Memorandum.*

*Sept.* 12, 1851.—Lord John Russell is desirous of obtaining the assistance of Sir James Graham in carrying on the Government.

*Sir James Graham's reply.*

*Sept.* 20, 1851.—. . . Sir James Graham has come to the conclusion that in present circumstances and in the manner proposed, his acceptance of Lord John's offer would not effect those public objects. He therefore respectfully declines the proposal.

The Russell Cabinet resumed office; but there was to be no revival of import duties.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord John Russell*, by Spencer Walpole, ii. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Letters of Sir James Graham*, by C. S. Parker, ii. 123, 132.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

*Feb. 25, 1851.*

Your Papa says all that is known for the moment is that it seems there will be a Graham-Russell Cabinet; a Stanley Cabinet is impossible for the time. . . . We went to Lady Palmerston's last Saturday. Your Papa had two hours with him on Sunday and showed him your last long letter. Lord P. said it was very interesting and very true.

*M.P.O., Feb'y. 27, 1851.*

MY DEAR ALGY,—At the moment when I write to you, rumour says that Lord Stanley has again failed in his endeavours to construct a Cabinet, and assigns as the cause of his failure the notorious fact that Gladstone and all the Peelites have refused to join him. The same rumour adds that the Queen has sent or is sending for Lord Palmerston to form a ministry. I believe both these rumours to be premature. I think that at this moment Stanley is in the agony of a struggle between perseverance and retreat. I further think he will persevere and hold office for a brief period, so making wreck of himself and his cause.

He must propose Protection or postpone it—if the former the country will be against him. He will dissolve the Parliament and be beaten in a new one—this because the labouring population are everywhere well off. If he postpone Protection then his own Party will call out traitor and desert him as they did Peel in '46. A few more hours will let us know.

You may rely on this, that there is no combination of parties that can stand without Palmerston.

*M.P.O., March 15, 1851.*

MY DEAR ALGY,—Every day I have intended to answer at length your most able and valuable letter on the State of Parties in France, and on their various possible and impossible relations to England.

I read it *litteratim* to Pam: who said he had never had the good fortune to peruse any document which indicated so large and so accurate a sweep of observation—nor one which was more cleverly expressed. It certainly, he added, is a masterpiece of diplomatic statesmanship.



Now write me therefore as many more as you can precisely in the same free and easy style and with the feeling on your mind of such complete unreserve as is the result of consciousness that you are writing to me alone. It will do you infinite good and you too may do infinite good in your turn. I have no time now (but I shall try to-morrow) to write fully. In the meantime observe the same caution that you have hitherto so properly followed. Do not commit yourself to any body or any thing.

There are no friendships between nations—nor between parties within nations; each in such connections seeks what he can get for himself. Frenchmen hate us—Legitimists hate us most. Orleanists little less, Republicans least, but they all hate us enough. We love France—we want France to prosper, and we recognise cordially the existing Government.

Out of this loose general observation rise many details which I shall try to let off for you to-morrow. Mamma and I go to Lady P.'s soirée this evening.

The Protectionists will support Lord John Russell's Anti-papal Bill—but the division will probably not take place for some nights yet.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

11 WALTON VILLAS, WALTON STREET,  
April 5, 1851.

MY DEAREST ALGY,—At last we have got into our own house. . . . Lord P. says if the Protectionists come in, you are the only man—next to himself—fit to be Foreign Secretary. . . . I said to your Papa Lord P. ought to give you some good appointment himself. Your Papa says wait a little.

July 3, 1851.

. . . . We have had a very short letter from Christopher . . . he tells us nothing of himself except that he has drawn a bill for £6. He never opens his mind to us. . . . Of course we begin to imagine all sorts of things . . . —told your Papa you were the handsomest young man in Paris and the most intelligent.

July 1851.

Your Papa told me this morning that you had written him one of the best letters he ever read. . . . He was telling [Mr Fry] how much the expenses of the *Post* have been cut down lately, and how he has discovered the cause why the *Post* has not increased in circulation when everybody, friends and foes, say that it has risen so much in good writing. The truth is, that it is so late in publication that the newsmen cannot get it in time and so go without it. Mr ——— it appears is to blame in the matter, but your Papa has taken steps to remedy the evil and he says that they will soon have an increased circulation.

An interesting commentary upon this is supplied by a letter from Mr Crompton to Peter Borthwick, dated 28th February 1852 :—

Have you noticed the return of newspaper stamps ordered by the House of Commons 10th Feb. 1852, giving each year from 1837 to 1850?

<i>Times</i>	increasing progressively to	11,900,000
<i>Daily News</i>	„	1,152,000
<i>Illustrated News</i>	„	3,467,007
<i>Lloyd's Weekly News</i>	„	2,559,000
<i>Weekly Despatch</i>	„	1,950,000
„ <i>Times</i>	„	2,037,703
<i>Morning Advertiser</i>	„	1,549,143
„ <i>Chronicle</i>	„	912,547
„ <i>Herald</i>	„	1,139,000
„ <i>Post</i>	„	829,000

This gives for the *Post* 15,942 weekly, daily 2657. The last return from Barlow is

Printed	.	.	.	15,400
Sold	.	.	.	14,890

so that I fear 1851 will be still lower than the present returns from Government.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Dasent in his *Life of J. T. Delane*, i. 152, gives the circulation of various papers in 1852 as follows: *Times*, 40,000; *Morning Advertiser*, 7000; *Daily News*, 3500; *Morning Post* and *Morning Chronicle*, under 3000.



Wm. T. Allen, del.

*Peter Borthwick*



PARIS,  
Sunday, July 6, 1851.

MY DEAR FATHER,—I have given directions to Wilson to forward with this a copy of the Second Edition containing an article published by the *Assemblée Nationale* of this morning, and which is of great importance. The A.N. is, you know, Guizot's paper and therefore open to all the Lieven<sup>1</sup> and Kisseleff<sup>2</sup> influences. The facts contained in the article are big news. The big words contained in it are worth answering. Don't you think so?

These three Powers, great big fellows in heavy rusty old armour, are to make a "League" against "Revolution," of which they consider Piedmont!!! and England!!! to be the exponents. Piedmont! where English influence is most powerful! where the people enjoy some liberty and the priests suffer some control!—where the State no sooner proposes to effect a loan than double the amount is offered at prices higher than the quotations of the Bourse! Piedmont is the exponent of "Revolution"! and Rome the exponent of "Conservatism"! Rome! with an exchequer ruined, with a Prince whose throne is balanced on the point of foreign bayonets. Rome, with the never enough to be admired governments of Florence and Naples, is to be supported against "Revolution," that is, against improvement.

The long and short of all which is, that despotism and priesthood are to be established throughout Germany and Italy, and to be stoutly upheld by hundreds of thousands of soldiers.

England, no doubt, will still hold her prudent course. Her genius cannot but aid everything noble and liberal in opposition to all that is selfish and oppressive. But were England to-morrow at the bottom of the sea, I am still convinced that the League of the Northern Powers, on the principles laid down in the *Assemblée Nationale*, will and must be shattered to pieces in a short time by the indomitable will of the spirit of freedom which is generating, as it were, at a steam power, that will burst through the old boilers.—Ever your affectionate son,

ALGERNON B.

In haste.—This is written in confidence and hastily. By the way, I believe I am growing fat.

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<sup>1</sup> Madame de Lieven was on intimate terms with Guizot.

<sup>2</sup> Russian Ambassador in Paris.

There was to be a change in the staff of the Embassy at Paris. Mr Edwardes, with whom Algernon had been living on terms of friendship and intimacy, was to be transferred, and we hear again of the inclination and lurking desire for a diplomatic career:—

Paget has shaved off his moustache: Edwardes says "to succeed me; he thinks his moustache the only difference between us." I wish I could have Edwardes's place, but it is a simple impossibility, as it imperatively and formally (especially the latter) requires a person to spend many years in dancing and copying despatches, leading the idlest of lives before such a dignity can be aspired to. *Nous changerons tout cela quelque jour*, or I am mistaken. . . . After all, Edwardes's place is not too tempting. He is not remarkably well paid, and in fact there is nothing like the *Post* if it can be made to pay roundly. Once set going, *vogue la galère*, we shall not stop easily nor fear to contend for any prize, be it never so high.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

They are in the *Sûreté* committing themselves more and more every day to English policy and Lord P., but slowly and by degrees, for they attacked him fiercely of old. Now they want you to write an article which they can quote. . . . It is something to have gained them round from England's enmity to her alliance. . . .

The Duke de Guiche goes as minister to Cassel. . . . It is a great loss to me, as he and the Duchess were most kind. They say they are very sorry that I am not a French subject; otherwise they would have been glad to take me as Secretary of Legation.

*July 9, 1851.*

Many thanks for your letter. I gave it to D. de Lhuys to show to the President. De de L. is a regular brick and takes pains to serve me. . . . Surely our doings must tell against the *Times'* inaccuracies.

The last sentence calls attention to the bold and fixed determination of the Borthwicks to have their paper

regarded as of importance equal to that of the *Times*. They could not ignore their incomparable inferiority in actual circulation; but that need not prevent them from securing the newest and truest information, whilst so far as judgment, accuracy, and literary ability were concerned, they had no intention of yielding precedence. It was to be a long and arduous struggle. It is difficult therefore to read without amusement the following letter, which, although it was not written until 1875, may be fitly inserted here. It gives, and it was doubtless intended to give, a suggestion of dignity and impudence. The great Delane, not less the Delane of castles and duchesses than of Printing House Square, good-naturedly throws a scrap of social gossip to his contemporary, oblivious of pretended rivalry, as much as to say "I think this kind of thing is in your line. It won't do for the *Times*."

*The Times*  
(undated).

MY DEAR MR BORTHWICK,—I have been staying at Berkeley Castle and witnessed the accident to the Duchess of Manchester. Both she and Miss Chetwynd are very anxious you should state that the Duchess was driving when the accident occurred, as much undeserved blame has been thrown upon Miss Chetwynd for having, through negligence or unskilfulness, been the cause of the accident. If you would like a pretext for returning to the subject, you may state that the Duchess was making favourable progress this morning and that the pain had considerably abated. Telegrams of enquiry continued to pour in. Pray excuse me for gratifying the desire of these rival charioteers, and believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN T. DELANE.

M.P.O., *Saturday*.

DEAREST ALGY,—I have not had time to write at length and I have not now. You may crow if you like in Paris over the *Post's* predictions on English policy. You see after all



the crises and papalities and other accidents the Ministers are about to close the Session stronger than when they opened it.

Bentley will be glad to publish and pay for a clever article on any subject of general Parisian information or observation or a regular letter. I shall see him again on Monday. But it would also be interesting if you gave us for the *Post* a brief, pithy, witty letter as often as you can signed A. B. or Alpha Beta, such as you write sometimes privately to me. Bentley's should be light, fashionable, funny.

To this may be added a fragment alluding to the Exhibition: it throws a little light upon the spirit which was animating the management of the paper:—

It is probably a real peace congress, mixed with some leaven of the old mischief in the persons of Cobden and other such false and shallow evanescences of Exeter Hall and Manchester philosophy.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

(? Aug. 1851.)

The Govt. won't accept the Questors'<sup>1</sup> prop., if it be passed. I don't believe in a coup d'état, though Jules de Lasteyrie<sup>2</sup> and all the majority do. The P.'s secretary, Mocquard, told me, "observe the calm attitude of the population: depend upon it if the President was to fight with the Assembly, the people will not rise in its defence."

Yet a few days later he writes:

PARIS, *Monday.*

MY DEAREST FATHER,—I am so much pre-occupied with business that I can scarcely find time to send you a word. This is the most important day since Louis Napoleon has held office. The result of it you will know before these lines reach

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<sup>1</sup> The Questors were the members charged with safeguarding the Assembly. A measure proposing to repeal the Electoral Law of May 31 had been thrown out by seven votes. It was rumoured at once that the President in consequence of this would attempt a coup d'état, and the Questors asked for powers to enable them to secure military aid in case of need. This was refused, mainly on the sentimental ground that the people were their own best guardians.

<sup>2</sup> A member of the Legislative Assembly.



you. I think the Questors' proposition will be rejected—in that case L. N. gains a great moral victory over the Assembly, which has brought defeat on itself.

It is not unlikely that some equivocal *ordre du jour* motion will be passed. If the Questors' proposal be adopted, I shall not be surprised to see a coup d'état—which would at this moment be very peaceably and cosily effected, as everything is perfectly still, and if L. N. kicked the Assembly out of window, I expect that Paris would look on smiling, the funds not unlikely rise, and the country prefects, etc. send in their adhesion to the new Government, which would no doubt convoke a constituent and, revising the constitution, re-arrange the affairs of the nation.

However, all this is speculation upon a subject on which you will shortly see the real face.

Again he writes, giving a gloomy picture of the prospect in Paris, adding that he is suffering from a painful boil on his nose:—

*Aug. 15, 1851.*

The people of Paris are against Louis Napoleon, and so is the National Assembly. . . . I believe the country . . . will seek its safety in the re-election of Louis Napoleon . . . the present Assembly will set aside all his votes as "lost votes," and choose the President from among the candidates. The situation will be terribly critical from the 4th of next month. . . . The *ouvriers* of Paris are very republican: an omnibus driver . . . was enthusiastic in praise of Napoleon. "And what do you think of his nephew?" asked I. "Ah! c'est un vaurien; nous l'enverrons promener à coups de fouet dans huit mois d'ici."

Peter Borthwick replied:—

*M.P.O., Tuesday, Aug. 19, 1851.*

MY DEAREST ALGY,—I should have written to you long ago—but Bentley has gone out of town, and I can only say on that subject, write—he will be sure to publish. He has made me an offer to write the life of the late Sir G. Stephenson, a work which I shall undertake if I can get access to the materials.

Your last letter I described to Lord P. on Saturday night, and at his request sent it to him confidentially on Sunday.

He writes to me as follows : " Dear Borthwick,—This may be all very true prophecy, but I should like to appeal to the prophet when the boil is cured. Yours sincerely, P. . . ." So if the boil is better write again. On Saturday night in conversation he said, " Well—but then the Assembly which takes the votes must look to the following election. If, as is manifest, the country is for L. N.—will the members of Assembly resist that will at the risk of their seats? It would not be so here." You might as well direct your attention to that point. He entirely concurs with you on the general question of the North-Eastern Powers. His general impression, however, is that " somehow or other " the crisis in France will slip over quietly.

We have here nothing political stirring except the great " Aggregate Meeting of the Roman Catholics " in Dublin this day. It will be as noisy, as brutal, and as eventually idle as other movements of the same kind in the same country.

The great arrangement about the *Post* and Crompton and me will be finally settled in January next. Crompton is very kind, generous and affectionate even in the matter. We are the very, very best of friends. I am going to shoot with him if possible in the first week in September. You should write to him when you can—a careful friendly letter—about yourself and about your views of the *Post* and its capabilities.

We shall print singles during the vacation—this is against my judgment on an estimate of years, but it saves us in the meantime an expenditure of £3000 and it will not, as I shall manage it, do us any harm.

From Kit I have no news whatever. This annoys me. Harriet and George are well, so is Mama. Crompton says I am much better—I think I am. I am sure at any rate I am your affectionate Father,

P. BORTHWICK.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

Sept. 9, 1851.

Your Papa writes in great spirits . . . he says Mr Crompton is very kind. . . . The *Post* is showing better by £80 to £90 a week this year—at the present time—than the corresponding week of last year.

M.P.O., Nov. 5, 1851.

MY DEAREST ALGY,—The *Times* had the President's speech in its second edition.

Now considering that we have throughout and up to this day, when it is most unpopular here to defend the President, given him the best and ablest and most judicious support, this exclusive favour to the *Times*, his most malignant enemy, proves how vain it is to put your trust in princes or to expect that princes are made of mettle that is most worthy. Henceforth we must believe as truths those statements of the *Times* which we have hitherto supposed to be libels. I now regret the pains I took in the Londonderry affair to save the President and also to answer from time to time the attacks of the *Times*.

The President will see by our article of to-morrow that we are above personal considerations in treating of political questions, but when personal questions are before us the *Post* hereafter must take precedence of the President.

You will communicate these sentiments officially to M. Mocquard and if possible to the President himself, in both instances respectfully but firmly.

The reference to Lord Londonderry<sup>1</sup> has to do with the case of the Emir Abd-el-Kader. He had been taken prisoner by the French in Algiers in 1847, and was now confined in the Chateau d'Amboise. Lord Londonderry had in vain urged the French Government to release him. In 1852 he was liberated by the Emperor and sent to live in Broussa, in Asia Minor. In 1860 he defended the Christians against the Turks at Damascus: he lived to visit Paris and London, and to volunteer for service in the French army in 1870. In connection with Lord Londonderry's efforts, the following sentence in a letter from the President to him is worth noting. It implies that the *mens conscia recti* is the sole comfort of one who has had greatness thrust upon him.

<sup>1</sup> The third Marquis, of Peninsular fame, afterwards Ambassador at St Petersburg, K.G., *d.* 1854.

*Louis Napoleon to Lord Londonderry.*

Sept. 13, 1851.

. . . . Vous me demandez si le pouvoir a changé mon cœur. Vous devez assez me connaître pour savoir que les honneurs à mes yeux ne sont qu'un fardeau, impuissant à éblouir mon esprit ou à paralyser les nobles disposition de mon âme.

PARIS, *Saturday*.

MY DEAR FATHER,—Thanks<sup>1</sup> for your note of the 5th, which I received but this morning.

Mocquard, the President's Secretary, swears he did not give the message to the *Times* before us. I have this confirmed on other authority. I am told the *Times* got slips of the *Patrie*, which had the first copy. O'Meagher translated part and the rest was "done" in London. As I sent it you by electric telegraph the incompleteness of the second edition was not of so very much consequence, but I shall be "up to" this new "dodge" on the next occasion. Apropos of telegraphs: this telegraph work cleans out one's pockets sadly. Now next week, the direct E.T. is to be open. I therefore want some £20 additional in hand, as there is every prospect of warm work and I shall have to keep the fluid constantly going. Unhappily, with the electric spark, I find that gold is the only motive power. . . .

By the way, some connections of the storm compelling Jupiter Anglicanus of our F.O. passed thro' here the other day. Edwardes wrote from London, begging me to find lodgings for Lord Jocelyn<sup>1</sup> and his family. I did so with no little trouble, and got them capital apartments, cheap and comfortable—wrote this to Edwardes, who in answer thanked me. I only heard the other day, some hours before they left, that they wished to see me. I called and found them out, and next day they were gone.

Edwardes, who returned this morning, tells me (what I did not know; if I had I should have called instantly) that he gave me the credit of my achievement and that they expected to thank me in person. If they pass through here on their way home I shall not again miss the opportunity of introducing myself

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<sup>1</sup> Lady Jocelyn was Lady Palmerston's daughter (Lady Fanny Cowper).

to so charming a lady, who has been long one of the idols of my idolatry. I shall dun her for the debt, she may depend, and then again, for more work. She asked E. who got the apartments. He said M. B. . . . She said, "Oh, that good little man—but is he in Paris?" Upon which E. explained that it was the "Le mauvais Petit" that had done the business, he who did the correspondence. "And very good information he sends too," said the Little Lady. Little *I* shall no longer be, for I am already six inches taller at receiving praise from such pretty lips.

Ed. says you are looking very well and very like me. Havas says you will soon be younger than me. This last I repeat as being a very clever compliment.

I have made my letter so long that I have scarce room for anything important, at least for details. As regards politics, you shall hear from me again to-morrow. In the meantime, let me tell you that I seriously think that it is now likely that within a short period we shall have either a coup d'état or a civil war. I will give you my reasons in my next. In the meantime put these things together:

President.      Univ. Suff.      Assembly.      Law, 31st May.

Election in Paris in 45 days hence.<sup>1</sup>

"Le Force Publique dont      Questors' proposition.  
moi seul je dispose." P.'s  
message of last year.

Oil	Vinegar
Dogs	Cats.

Make these things agree if you can.

Direct telegraphic communication between London and Paris was now a novelty.<sup>2</sup> It inspired Algernon with a scheme which he transmitted in a memorandum to his employers. His idea was to start a new evening paper—"for two reasons—as a good speculation, and as a foil to the *Post*." It should give (1) authentic

<sup>1</sup> On 20th, 21st December Louis Napoleon was elected, by more than seven million votes, President for ten years.

<sup>2</sup> It was established in November 1851.

announcement of great events; (2) a daily telegram from Paris with the latest continental news; (3) Paris Bourse news; (4) city intelligence; (5) Parliamentary reports of the day; (6) all great news of the day; (7) leaders. No fashionable news and no previous Parliamentary reports were to be included, so that there would be no rivalry with the *Post*. The extra cost would be comparatively small, and should be covered by advertisements. According to his calculation a profit of £60 a week might be relied upon. He slyly adds that "we might constantly puff the *Post*. In giving, for instance, news of a battle . . . we would say, 'We expect to find details in the *Post* of to-morrow.'" The proprietor evidently thought his energetic young friend was going too fast: he himself had no wish to add to his present liabilities; he was rather disposed to contract than expand them, and there is no evidence that the project was considered.

*Thomas Barton*<sup>1</sup> to *Algernon Borthwick*.

. . . . I have to-day paid £11 into Messrs Twining to your credit with Messrs Lafittes. . . . Your father wishes me to add that Lord P. is charmed with what you did a few days since. . . . Your gov<sup>r</sup>. will write in a few days telling you how pleased he is. . . . I am sure you will be glad to hear the *Post* is progressing most favourably.

The private correspondence says little of the coup d'état, but that Algernon did his duty to the *Post* is made manifest by his father's letter of 5th December:—

Well done, dearest Algy; your letter in our third edition to-day is beyond praise. Addison could not have written it better. It is something to have everybody proud of you. You have beat the *Times* hollow.

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<sup>1</sup> Manager of the *Morning Post*.



A few weeks before his death, however, Lord Glenesk wrote the following fragment of autobiography, which may be given in full :—

*Mrs Norton and the Coup d'état.*

On the 1st December I went to the usual monthly reception, which was held at 9 o'clock. The Prince President had had the pleasant idea of holding a reception confined to a few of his ministers and high officials, the foreign ambassadors and a few friends, amongst whom he did not forget the English. The assembly was never numerous, but was composed of all those who could in one way or another make an evening pleasant. The pamphlet which had appeared shortly before, had stirred public opinion to the height of expectancy, as it was already known that the Assembly had the intention of attempting some form of coup d'état which should forestall any action on the President's part. One thought pervaded every mind, but this could not prevent the many subjects of conversation from pursuing the bright course of a French soirée where wit and repartee are ever present. The hours sped quickly, and already people were thinking of going home. I was standing in conversation with Lord Normanby, the English ambassador, when the celebrated Mrs Norton approached us and asked him if he could lend her a copy of the pamphlet. Lord Normanby said he was sorry he had sent his to England, or of course he would have put it at her service.

"But," said I, "I am fortunate indeed in having at my house a copy of that very pamphlet, all of which I translated the other night and sent home to the *Morning Post*, and I can now let you have the book."

On her expressing her joy at this, I observed, "And what will you give me for it?"

She replied, "What do you ask?"

"Breakfast," quoth I. "I will bring it to you to-morrow if you will give me breakfast."

"Agreed!"

At this moment there came up one of the ministers, who said, "Ah, Madame Norton, how happy we are to have you

in Paris ! And pray tell me if I cannot be of some service to you ? We must do something to detain you."

She said, "There is only one thing I wish for—to see a coup d'état."

"That is not in my province," he said, turning away laughingly.

The Prince President was not five feet off from the group and he must have heard the little conversation. He turned round and with his usual slow manner proceeded to quit the salon for his private apartments, so quietly that not the slightest impression was made upon anyone of what was going to happen in an hour.

After helping Mrs Norton and other ladies into their carriages, I walked home in a brilliant moonlight night to my apartment and my bed.

The next morning the servant woke me very early to tell me, "Rouse yourself, monsieur ! There is a coup d'état ! The troops are all moving, and all the walls are placarded with the announcement !"

I was up in very short time and went into the streets, where I found it was all true. The President's proclamation denouncing and dissolving the Assembly and appealing to the French nation and summoning them to ratify his act, was posted everywhere. Taking hasty notes of all these placards, I pushed my way past the military who were moving in steadily on certain points, and hastened to the opposite side of the river where the central bureau of the telegraph office was situated. Having despatched my message at great length to London, on coming out of the bureau I made inquiries from police and others as to what had been happening, and I found that as yet no sort of resistance was offered to the march of the troops.

Foreseeing that there would be a breathing space before traffic would be stopped, I happily remembered my promise made to Mrs Norton, who was living at an hotel opposite our Embassy. I ascertained the number of her room, and rushing upstairs, I knocked sharply at the door.

She quickly cried out, "What is it—who is there ?"

Upon which I answered, "Algernon Borthwick, come for his breakfast !"



"But," said she, again, "are you mad? It's too early for breakfast. What *do* you want?"

I answered, "You! I want to show you the coup d'état. It has happened, and if you will put on your things you can't come out too soon, or the streets will be blocked."

She replied, full of excitement, "Oh, of course! I'll come at once!"

And in a reasonably short time she came out and I proceeded with her to the streets. Here we might have met with some little trouble, but I explained to the soldiers wherever there was the slightest objection, I was escorting an English lady who lived on the other side of the Seine. We soon reached the Place de la Concorde and the Bridge. The Champs Élysées was a long string of troops marching, while among the trees were the cuirassiers with their white cloaks, *en bivouac*; it made a most picturesque scene. As we were passing the bridge we could see deputies arriving and insisting on their right to enter their chamber, but we could see them prevented from access to it, while some earlier arrivals who had got in were being turned out. One or two of them attempted to address the public, but were speedily removed in vans to the conciergerie and other places of detention. These unaccustomed scenes were immensely interesting in the early morning, and we made our way along the quais to a further bridge which we sought to cross. We were as before forbidden, but on my story being repeated that I was escorting an English lady to her home on the other side, and after a glance at the beautiful lady, they most politely made way. We soon arrived at the Tuileries, and through the great approach to it we could see the plumes of staff officers and all the splendid appurtenances of a military assemblage.

At this point I asked the sentry to allow us to pass, and receiving a gruff "Impossible, monsieur!" I then turned to my companion and said:

"Now it is your turn to tell the same story and to ask the favour."

She at once turned her magnificent eyes on the sentry, who I suppose had never before seen anything so lovely, and on her asking to be allowed to go across the courtyard of the Tuileries, she met with the same "Impossible!" but in a far

gentler tone. Then, rather awkwardly, the poor man, who evidently did not like the duty of refusing, exclaimed :

“ Mais, enfin, madame, je vais appeler le sergent.”

In a few seconds the sergeant appeared and on the matter being explained, said :

“ Mon Dieu, madame, si c'était en mon pouvoir, j'agrérais volontiers votre requête. Je chercherai l'officier.”

Upon which a very smart young officer speedily made his appearance, and, on re-explanation by the lady, he said :

“ Je suis bien fâché de vous donner un refus, mais vous voyez d'ici donc ces panaches. Ce sont les généraux de l'armée de Paris. Eh bien ! si je vous accordais votre demande, je serais certainement cassé et vous ne voudriez pas que je sois cassé ? ”

The charming lady hastened to assure him with the most persuasive glances that she desired nothing of the sort, but that it was absolutely of the very greatest importance that she should be allowed to pass to save the distance she would lose in going a long round and meeting with other obstacles, possibly of not so gentle a character. Her eyes triumphed.

He said, bowing, “ Eh, bien ! il n'y a qu'un moyen. Je vais vous mettre aux arrêts.”

And calling a file of soldiers, he marched us quietly across the forbidden courtyard, and set us free in the Rue de Rivoli.

From this point we succeeded in regaining her hotel, and I, having well earned it, had a most delightful breakfast with the famous Mrs Norton. I had brought the pamphlet which she desired, so that she rejoiced in every way at our fortunate meeting of the previous night.

Having collected a good deal of intelligence about the armed forces which were proceeding quietly to their rendezvous about the centre of the city, where they could deal with the Reds if their turbulence induced them to offer any attack or make any serious attempt at mischief, I sent off a series of telegrams on these points, and finding from a friend that the more violent of the Rouges had made an appointment in the afternoon to meet at the Bureau of the *Siècle*—the great Republican paper of those days where I knew many of the staff—I found it would be soon time to go thither myself if I wished to gain any information about the decisions come to.

I learned that the would-be insurgents had resolved to take their own course in spite of the advice of more moderate men, and I was told that the day would pass without any strife or struggle, but that on the morrow there would be bloodshed and that it would take place in the afternoon. I was, therefore, in possession of all that could be known. The whole of Paris was placarded by the Government with the advice to all good citizens to remain at home and not take part in the street demonstrations. This was pretty generally followed, and certainly those who were about the streets were without evil intention. I therefore slowly went home. The night was dark, but the moon rising again soon lent that colouring to the scene which Paris with all its monumental beauty shows on such a night beneath the myriad stars and all the glowing lights of the city. I could not help retracing my steps across the Pont de la Concorde, and, as I cast my eyes over the parapet, wondering at the absolute calm which prevailed, with not a threat in the sky nor on earth except the cuirassiers still bivouacked in the Champs Élysées; and watching the rush of the river it seemed terrible to realise what might burst upon the city on the morrow when the afternoon was certain to be the scene of warfare. The day that preceded this evening had been absolutely calm in Paris, and the Prince President, quitting the Elysée, made a promenade of the boulevards. He was on horseback and alone, in advance of all escort. He showed the perfect courage of the best. His bearing was most gallant, although he exposed himself to any desperate attempt. Thus what may be called the second day of the coup d'état came to an end in apparent peace.

The break of daylight on the third day Paris was again itself, and in spite of the proclamation, the peaceable citizens were too curious to refrain from going about in the streets. They watched with the keenest interest the various military movements, the aides de camp galloping from point to point; there was no hesitation about the attitude of the troops, and I subsequently learnt that only one General had sent in his resignation, a man no less distinguished than Canrobert. On receiving it General Arnaud, to whom it was conveyed, instantly sent back an order for him to proceed with his division to the Boulevards. This order, conveyed with abrupt precision, had

its effect at once. The old soldier obeyed, but singular to relate, the episode which went down to history as the Massacre of the Boulevards befel this very General and his division. Some people concealed in the house on the Boulevard des Italiens fired on the troops, who in their haste to reply, got out of hand, and instead of firing on the upper story of the house, directed their bullets on some passers-by, and killed some hundred and fifty, all of them harmless pedestrians, a respected English chemist being one of them, and other well-known innocent men. I had been on the Boulevards myself before this occurred, but I went down the Rue de Richelieu to get to rooms near the Post Office, where I went to write my account up to the latest time. I had not been long there, when having passed not far from the barricade I saw the troops proceed to assault it, and then the battle being thus opened, I had no sooner gained my room and sat down to write than the windows were kept vibrating with discharges as the contest went on. I finished and despatched my letter by 5 o'clock and returned to my home through deserted streets in which there was no danger except such as could be classed as accidental.

Thus ended the abortive rising which never had a chance of any success, and which resulted in the death of some few hundreds of the Reds, all of them desperate men, and in the deportation of some thousands of the prisoners. This was all that happened on the days which appear now so trifling beside the terrors of the Commune. The day after, the Prince President rode through the town well ahead of his escort, saluted by the acclamations of the multitudes.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

PARIS, *Sunday.*

DEAREST FATHER,—. . . Your articles are admirable. Don't get too Presidential. I will write to-night of the state of the country. Two *hours*, not "two *days* of heavy boom," etc., and these not very heavy. Do pray I entreat you take my letters, such as they are, for text, and insert telegraphs as they are sent without interpolations. All that news from the provinces in Saturday's paper is much too favourable. In the summary of the day on Thursday, the very first paragraph

is completely incorrect ; for instance, there was no fighting whatever in the *Faubourg*, 'twas in the *Quartier St Antoine*. Your friend doesn't know Paris. The "some persons" were a large crowd.

But I've no time for criticisms—I only got to bed at three this morning. It is dreadfully hard work, but I need no assistance. None, none, none but my own hand and eyes. When they will not satisfy you, send others. I desire no one.

The following memorandum "of certain events connected with the Coup d'État," written several years later by Lord Palmerston, is worth recording as showing that he was at times under obligations to Peter Borthwick.

On Sunday, the 7th December, Mr Borthwick, editor of the *Morning Post*, came to me. He said he had a communication to make to me which it might be important for me to receive, and which he considered himself at liberty to make. He said that the day before, that is, Saturday the 6th, General de Rumigny, attached to the French Court, had come to him and said that as he, Mr Borthwick, had been civil and attentive to the ex-Royal family, he (General Rumigny) had been desired to say to him that if it would be useful to his paper, he should have daily accounts of the military operations which were about to commence in the North of France ; that the Prince de Joinville and the Duc d'Aumale<sup>1</sup> were gone to Lille to take the command of the troops to act against the President ; and that the Royal Family had endeavoured to dissuade the Prince de Joinville from this step, but in vain ; and that finding him determined on doing so, the Duc d'Aumale had said, " My brother is a sailor, he knows nothing of military operations ; I am a soldier, I will go with him and share his fate and fortune." Mr Borthwick said he had declined the offered communications, as he did not wish the paper to be considered the organ of the Orleans family ; and as the communication had not been made to him under the condition of secrecy, he came at once to tell me of it.

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<sup>1</sup> Sons of the late King Louis Philippe.



He goes on to say that he at once made inquiries through the Home Office, and learnt that their police reported Joinville to be confined to his bed, too ill to see anyone. This satisfied him that the Prince had gone. The Duc d'Aumale was known to have been in Naples. A few days before the coup, however, Lord Palmerston had learnt from his own brother, the minister, that the Duke had suddenly left for England on account of the alarming reports of the health of the ex-Queen of France. Meanwhile, Joinville reappeared, having apparently learnt at Ostend that the attempt was incapable of success. The memorandum concludes:—

This confirmed the whole of General de Rumigny's story, for D'Aumale had evidently, by preconcerted arrangement, left Naples to meet Joinville on a given day at a given place; and this proved that there had been a plot long proposed for an attack on the President. . . . All this clearly proves that if the President had not struck when he did, he would himself have been knocked over.<sup>1</sup>

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

Don't be in a hurry to conclude that the fighting is over. The disaffection is immense. I will write you more to-night.

I especially desire that you will not copy a single fact unless headed—The *Moniteur* contains, the *Patrie* says, and so forth—from the other papers. The telegraphs are abominably uncertain. They take one's money and sometimes don't send, frequently dock, etc. etc.

The *Times* man tells me that the Chief Director of the *Times*, who was here a little while ago, called his attention to my correspondence, praising it.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

(December) 1851.

Your Papa and I have been in great anxiety about money matters, but I am happy to say that Mr Crompton, of his own

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of Viscount Palmerston*, by Evelyn Ashley, i. 287.

accord, before he left requested your Papa to make out a list of all liabilities and send to him, to give him a full statement of everything for the purpose of having a final settlement of all. He is very kind and good . . . he is in high spirits about the *Post*: in short, nothing can be better than his disposition to serve us.

Peter Borthwick's affairs were indeed a cause of frequent and grave anxiety. At one time he was compelled to give up his house; upon which the family of his daughter's governess, Miss Giblett, came to the rescue and offered their hospitality until matters improved—a generous act which reflects credit on both parties concerned; one which the Borthwicks did not fail to appreciate and never forgot.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

PARIS,  
Tuesday, Dec. 1851.

. . . . At the Elysée—Ernest Bruce<sup>1</sup> came up to me. He was praising the Pt. and said what a pity it was that Palmerston was against him. I told him "Nonsense!" He said, "Yes, but I have it from good authority—it came from here—the Elysée."

I assured him the contrary was the fact.

He said, "Well, Normanby was not much for him, and I hear he was very coolly received last Monday."

This agrees with what Mocquard tells me.

Lamarche wrote to me the other day saying that M. Chambolle told him that Lord N. had expressed himself in very, very strong terms opposed to the President's line of policy.

. . . . I have no time to write any more about all this bosh; but certainly I must say that of all the preciously ill-served Services that exist, our Diplomatic Service I should take to be the worst—at least, if everywhere it is as ill-served as here.

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<sup>1</sup> Afterwards third Marquis of Ailesbury. He was Vice-Chamberlain in successive Conservative Administrations.

Peter Borthwick's own views upon the situation are found in this draft of a letter which is addressed to an unnamed correspondent :—

*Most confidential.*

M.P.O., Jan. 1, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,—Since the French President made his coup d'état, down to this moment I have been daily and nightly in close attendance here. On Saturdays only have I slept at home, and my visits to the club have been so rare and so late at night that it was only on Saturday that I received your note of Xmas day. I am sure I shall, therefore, have your pardon for the late date at the head of this letter. . . .

Lord John Russell's ministry has, by Lord Palmerston's loss, received a *political* shock which, were he to "widen the basis" to the extent of every inch of Peelite ground, would insure its disgraceful fall on the first movement of parliamentary action. Its disorganisation is so complete that a breath must destroy it.

And were this otherwise the *personal* discredit which the actors in this illegitimate drama have earned for themselves is so deep and so damning that when it shall fully appear it must annihilate the strongest political combination possible or impossible.

The *Times* was permitted, or rather instructed, to tell too much on Wednesday the 24th ult. It then no doubt told much of the truth. Lord Palmerston was "sacrificed" to the mislikings of the "elder statesmen of Europe," and to a hoped-for rapprochement between Whigs and Peelites, impracticable while he was minister. This was substantially the real ground. The cause now industriously assigned is a mere pretence which is too transparent to beguile the intelligence of childhood. Walewski<sup>1</sup> communicated to Lord Palmerston the news of the events in France, on the very moment of its receipt by his Excellency. He did so by conversation in the first instance, and by reading and leaving a copy of the despatch which he had received from his Government. He asked our minister's opinion of the coup d'état, and received for answer that England like the rest of Europe had a direct interest in

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<sup>1</sup> French Ambassador in London.



the welfare of France ; that she was not, however, interested in the success of any French party, the success of France alone concerned her ; that for some time past anyone had seen that a coup d'état had become inevitable—it might have been made by the President, it might have been made by the Assembly ; by one or other it must have been struck. By the Assembly a coup d'état would have necessarily involved a civil war ; by the President such an issue was improbable. We should be glad therefore if, the latter branch of the alternative having been adopted, a strong French government based upon the willing confidence of a free people should result. But upon the proceedings by which so desirable an end might be consummated, it would be wrong for England to express any opinion either in approval or disapproval. That was a question for the decision of the thirty-three millions of people who constitute the French nation. These ideas, expressed with Lord Palmerston's peculiar clearness and felicity, formed the substance of the verbal reply and of the written answer to the despatch which *more suo* was transmitted to Walewski and (in copy) to our Embassy at Paris two hours afterwards.

He goes on to explain that owing to an episode of a private character, Lord Normanby had been subjected to reproof by the Emperor, and had consequently ceased to be an advocate of his policy and pretensions. He had at once asked for instructions from home ; was he to show the cold shoulder ? As he put it, was he to publicly exhibit disapproval of the President's reprehensible conduct ? Lord Palmerston had replied : "England had no cold and no warm shoulders to show to anybody concerned. She was to look, as becomes her, all the world straight in the face." Unfortunately, Borthwick goes on, Lord Palmerston, "on account of his faithful guardianship of his country's foreign relations," had annoyed, and incurred the resentment of, the Ambassador, who complained at once to the Cabinet of

the irregular conduct of his chief. Lord Palmerston's explanations, says Borthwick, were perfectly satisfactory, and peace had apparently been secured, "until on the 23rd the unexpected missive reached Broadlands and the Minister was out." He concludes by pointing out, justly enough, that the Cabinet then proceeded to confirm in substance what they had previously condemned in form.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

PARIS,

Jan. 3, 1852, 5 P.M.

MY DEAREST FATHER,—. . . The English here are almost unanimous in favour of Lord Palmerston. Yesterday at Lady Dundonald's, I was talking to a Mr Napier (the Hon.<sup>1</sup>) and to Baillie Cochrane. Napier was praising Lord P., and saying that his triumphant accession to power was inevitable. "As for me," said he, "I haven't a vote, but I wish I had, for though I think he's treated my brother d——d ill, yet I think his policy so right that I would give my vote to him without a moment's hesitation." Then turning to Baillie, "Shall you give him your vote?"

Baillie seemed puzzled—he was looking on the ground.

"Hum, no"—he said, then looking up—"Well, I don't know. I suppose I shall if Borthwick comes and talks me into it."

I received a letter last night, requesting me on the part of the Prince to call at the Elysée to-day at three o'clock.

I did so, and have passed very nearly an hour with Louis Napoleon. He shook hands with me and thanked me very warmly for my "kindness" to him. He asked after you—begged to be remembered to you and requested me to thank you for the impartial view that you had taken in the *Post* of French affairs.

I told him that in the *Post* we had done our best to

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<sup>1</sup> Probably Hon. William Napier, born 1821, Clerk of the Works at Hong-Kong. His brother, tenth baron, afterwards enjoyed a distinguished diplomatic career, whatever his earlier disappointments may have been.

represent the truth, and that at this very moment we were about to make great efforts to overcome the *Times* and thoroughly to discredit it in the eyes of the English public. He expressed his pleasure at this. 'Then—said he was very very sorry that Lord P. had quitted office, and that he had written to Walewski to instruct him to express "son vif regret," for he had always found Lord Palmerston most just and "loyal" towards France.

I related to him the sudden manner of Lord P.'s dismissal, and how astonished was all England when it read on the morning of the 24th in the "*Times*, chosen by the Ministry for its organ," the news of its favourite minister's abrupt dismissal. I told him that no doubt he was aware of the enmity which some of the "Elder Statesmen of Europe" bore to anything so honest and English as our foreign policy—that intrigues had been carefully hatched, having for their object the overthrow of our English minister, and that the coup d'état in France had offered an opportunity and the excuse for their consummation. I then explained the history of the Cabinet Councils—Lord N.'s despatches and the straightforward manner in which Lord Palmerston had acted. I then made a review of past and present state of parties, discussing their history rapidly from the time when Sir Robert Peel alienated the Tories from his Cabinet till to-day, when Lord John Russell breaks up the Whig Party. I explained how Whigs and Radicals and Protectionists would modify, each, their views, and form next session a great constitutional party whose motto would be "confidence in Palmerston," whose home policy would be at once liberal and conservative, and whose foreign policy would be guided by that good feeling and truth of which he (L. N.) had just expressed his approbation.

He said that he wished very much the return of Lord P. to office, and was glad to hear of the prospects of parties in England—that with Lord P. (this latter part of the conversation was in English) "he could understand himself always well for the welfare of his country (France) and for the peace he so much desired."

He told me that he reads the *Times* and *Post* every day, and directing my attention to the *Times* of yesterday, said it was

absurd to say, as it did, that all elections were made in accordance with the wishes of Government whatever they might be, and cited his own election of the 10th December,<sup>1</sup> which was clearly in direct opposition to the wishes of Cavaignac, as a manifest proof of the contrary. He said it would be an apt case for citation in the *Post*.

I then explained how the *Times* correspondent in Paris was an honest man, but that the *Times* had sent over two special correspondents, charged to distort and exaggerate every fact that could be brought against him; that this was part and parcel of the intrigue against Lord P.; that the *Times* was at present used to show two things: first, what an atrocious and unconstitutional tyranny was exercised in France, and next, how bad was the conduct of Lord P. in approving of it. I begged him to pay no serious attention to such infamous and provocative articles as he had read (he told me he had) in the *Times* of this morning—and to believe the honest English mind would soon reject with loathing all such poison when its nature was clearly shewn.

He said that Thiers, he knew, was very active in Belgium and that he contributed in no small degree to the present state of affairs in England, and the statements in the *Times*.

I told him that you had commissioned me to write a short history of the coup d'état. At once he offered every assistance in his power.

I said I should often require information—statistical and general—from his Ministers. He said they should give me what I required—that I could always reach himself through his Secretary—that he was very grateful for past good deeds and would aid in future ones.

In speaking again of the Ministry he said—"I trust that the Cabinet will treat me as fairly as Lord Palmerston did, for if they do not, it might lead to mischief." These are his own words.

All this is the most important portion of the interview.

I have not a moment more—I must save this day's post.

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<sup>1</sup> Elected President 10th December 1848 with a majority of 4,000,000 votes over Cavaignac.

M.P.O., *Tuesday, Jan. 21, 1852.*

MY DEAREST ALGY,—When you have an opportunity, I wish you to convey to the Prince President in such terms as you think will be most acceptable the expression of my profound respect and add to it that of my sincere gratitude for the permission so kindly granted to you in respect of the Proclamation.<sup>1</sup> I was enabled to publish that important state paper earlier than any other London journal, and your telegraphic summary of the Constitution was also in time to be first.

This was of great importance to the *Morning Post*—and, what is of still higher moment, it was of great value to the cause which we are advocating. It helped us to destroy by anticipation the mischievous effects which the *Times* is labouring so diligently to produce upon the public mind on the subject of our relations with France.

There is nothing which gives a journal so much power and influence as early and exclusive intelligence, and you will perceive by my leaders the uses to which I have directed the strength thus created—uses of which I cannot doubt that Prince Louis Napoleon will approve. It is manifestly for the interests both of France and England that relations of perfect amity should subsist between the two Governments; and the continuance of this good understanding is not less necessary for the tranquillity of Europe and the development of European prosperity.

To M. Mocquard also express my respectful and grateful acknowledgments.

You wish to know the state of public affairs here. It is briefly this: Our Government has placed itself in a dilemma, on neither horn of which can it possibly sit. Its early defeat I regard as certain. Ld. John Russell has to account to the nation for his "sacrifice" of Ld. Palmerston. He seems prepared to assign as the cause of this Ld. Palmerston's early approval to Count Walewski of the coup d'état of Louis Napoleon. The answer to this by the country is, Then you (Russell) disapprove of the said "coup." But you have

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<sup>1</sup> The Proclamation of January 14, 1852, accompanying the promulgation of the New Constitution.

expressed to the French Government your determination to adhere to Ld. Palmerston's policy of friendly relations with France. To which of the two then do you lie? To Louis Napoleon? or to the people of England? We, the House of Commons, will not permit you to deceive either. You shall explicitly declare your policy. If then Ld. John shall say, I am as friendly to France as Ld. Palmerston. Then he is asked, Why did you dismiss that statesman for his approval of the coup d'état? If he say on the other hand, "I am less friendly to France," public opinion will on that account chase him from power for the double sin of duplicity towards the President and of a mischievous as well as false course towards England.

If, however, driven from the French question altogether, Ld. John fall back upon his first explanation in the *Times*—then he will sink into a still more fatal gulph. For the English people will never tolerate the usurpation of the Queen's right to name her own servants by any of "the Elder Statesmen" of Europe.

You will see from this brief sketch that Ld. John Russell's Cabinet has become an impossibility. Everyone looks to Lord Palmerston as the only statesman sufficiently strong in public confidence to become his successor, and I feel confident that in a very short time we shall have a Palmerston administration.<sup>1</sup>

Of the President's Constitution all really thinking men in this country highly approve. They think it embodies all the principles of a wholesome and stable government for France. It has also this inestimable value, that it affords room for such prospective adaptation to an improving society as shall secure advancement without tolerating revolution. I feel sure that it will enable the President, if it be duly administered, to fulfil the glorious mission to which he has devoted his vast and comprehensive genius, that, namely, of closing for France and therefore for Europe the era of Revolutions.

I write in very great haste. I should have written you a shorter note if I had been able to command more time.

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<sup>1</sup> The wish was father to the thought. The next Prime Minister was to be Lord Derby, followed by Lord Aberdeen.



*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

The following corrections in the MS. of the President's proclamation<sup>1</sup> struck me as remarkably curious. Speaking of the Senate, the proclamation says that it is the guardian "du pacte fondamental et des libertés publiques (here inserted, compatibles avec la constitution) et c'est . . ." Still more remarkable is the following correction of the concluding phrase: "puisse la sanction que vous avez donné à mes efforts être béni du ciel (here inserted, alors la paix sera assurée au dedans et au dehors). . . ." These additions are made with the Prince's own hand in the last draft of the Proclamation. The second addition is curious, as it is quite unnecessary and is evidently inserted with a political object. I believe that Louis Napoleon's capabilities and intentions are entirely pacific. The *Times* won't believe this, but the *Times* in donning the petticoats of an old woman has put them over its head instead of its latter end—a circumstance which increases the number and the intensity of its blunders whilst it also facilitates its corrections. . . .

*Par* is written in the MS. like *Sur*. I translated, "what is the control to be exercised over the Legislative Body?" I ought to have written "by the L. B." And you have printed—"it has shut up within insurmountable barriers." It should be, "it has not shut up."

I do not know that they are worth correcting, but I send them for your own guidance in writing.

M.P.O., Jan. 27, 1852.

MY DEAREST ALGY,—It was all right about the Orleans property. You said the President had never intended to confiscate it. He has not confiscated any portion of it, and nobody laughed at you, they only admire you for giving us the earliest intelligence. Your telegraphic news were in our first edition—none of the rest had them until their second. It is therefore another feather in your cap.

I have ordered Barton to add *one* guinea weekly to your salary.

Crompton on going away desired me to give you his kindest regards and to add that "he felt much more towards you than he can express."

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<sup>1</sup> See the preceding letter.



*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

*Jan. 31, 1852.*

Mr Crompton has felt a good deal the death of Mr Fry. . . . Mr A. is going to give (your Papa) £100 to help a little for the present. I fear you have been disappointed at getting only £50 advance of salary. Your Papa will make it more by and bye. He could not prudently do more at present. . . . He has been so exhausted of late. . . . This morning he did not get to bed till 5 and was off to Park Lane at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 9. He has been complaining of late of excessive thirst. . . . They all come to him to know Lord P.'s sentiments: indeed, Lord P. refers them to him, saying, "Borthwick will tell you; he knows everything." Lady P. told him that she had secured a place long ago to hear Lord P.'s speech in the H. of C.;<sup>1</sup> that she had asked for a seat for a niece of hers but could not get it. . . . I have not heard again from Kit. . . . in his last he said he had been very unwell, but did not say what of. . . . Poor dear Kit, how glad we shall all be to see him again.

PARIS,

*Sunday evening (? February 1852).*

MY DEAR FATHER,—The letters you were so good as to write me during the ministerial crisis in England were very valuable to me, and I thank you very much for them.

I cannot better express to you my ideas of the policy to be pursued towards France than by saying that daily I more and more understand the force of Lord P.'s definition of our position when he called us "Benevolent Spectators." Therefore, when I beg you to write an article or two to please the Republicans I do not mean that you should adopt them. (Perhaps we have adopted L. Napoleon a little too strongly.)

France is a country which must always hold a grand position in Europe and which in the present state of the world is the natural ally of England. England wants the friendship of France. If this be true, it is still more true that France needs

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<sup>1</sup> At the opening of the session, stating the circumstances of his resignation.

the friendship of England. These are two large irregularly defined facts. Looking now at the lesser but clearly defined circumstance we find :—on the one hand,

England, Liberal, wise and mighty as Lord Palmerston maintains her :

and England, Reactionary, foolish and weak (as a strong giant without brains or eyes) as Lord Aberdeen or Disraeli or any other ignorant and imbecile man would make her.

On the other hand, we have :—

France, whose natural policy is Liberal sometimes, though rarely it is true that it places her in opposition to England ; but on the whole, what with mutual concession and mutual aid, the two sisters might be the best friends and the greatest ladies amongst nations.

But unluckily France is "*Polygame*." She has for husbands a King—a young King rather illegitimate—a Republican, a Red Republican ; and some people swear she has an Emperor in reserve.

Now England has espoused Palmerston. Therefore the question is, which of France's husbands is the best friend of England and Palmerston—for the poor lady has no opinion of her own, but is led by the nose by whichever of her husbands has the upper hand.

As these gentlemen have hitherto played a game of see-saw, it is evidently wise to play the part of a benevolent spectator and make friends with the person whom France "*pro tem*" prefers. Yet it is almost dangerous to give a hand to any *one*, for the others turn against him and you.

Now let us see how the gentlemen are disposed. First we have—

The Legitimist. A stupid-headed blunderer, a decided enemy of England and everything liberal—a man standing on superstition and prejudice which are rocks as hard as his head ; but they are placed on foundations of dust, into which the blind creature does not perceive that he is fast sinking, shortly to be numbered with the ashes of the past.

Next, the Orleanist. A hollow friend. A jealous, bitter personage, yet he has a numerous following. His representatives are a boy and Protestant woman regent. I doubt if gay France care for such sorry nuptials. "Let him tarry at

Jericho (or Claremont<sup>1</sup>) till his beard grow," will be her exclamation.

Then, the Red Republican. A bloody personage, misguided, otherwise not of a bad disposition, not uncharitable and frequently very impartial; but with a strange propensity to follow will-o'-the-wisps; a foe to selfishness but honouring generosity, who pursues noble ideas though by deplorable means. Do not despise him. Set him in the right path and he will be grateful.

Next, the Republican. An honest man, proud of his independence, who insists that he is followed by the majority of France; a friend to gradual progress and improvement. A most important personage, because he always holds the balance of power between authority and rebellion. He is that National Guard on whom, the moment he ranges himself on the people's side, the soldier refuses to fire. The army is obedient and would always fire on the people, but the moment the National Guard joins them—the movement, whatever it may be, is national and the army joins too.

He is a small landed proprietor, a hardy peasant, sometimes learned, sometimes ignorant, but almost always with the very best notions of his own interests. Of Liberal and new ideas, he is a good friend to England.

Louis Napoleon. Swears he is England's friend; so much the better. He is the man in possession. Whether the Republican will allow him to keep it is a problem. The others are tooth and nail his enemies. If he become Emperor his position will be very dangerous and cannot last, for he cannot found a dynasty, and one of the first mentioned persons must eventually turn up. However, you ought to be as well enlightened about Louis Napoleon by this time as I. Let us hope he is sincere in his friendship as far as things have gone, yet everything leads one to think him honest.

Of the before mentioned persons: let us choose our best friend for our closest embrace, but let us conciliate all.

The Legitimist refuses to shake hands! We make him

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<sup>1</sup> The ex-King Louis Philippe had died at Claremont in August 1850. His son, Duke of Orleans, had married Princess Hélène of Mecklenburg-Schwerin; he died 1842.

a bow and "if we can ever do anything to oblige him we will."

The Orleanist and the Red Republican give us—the latter, a fraternal salutation ; the former a most polite bow.

Louis Napoleon and the Republican shake hands with us earnestly and apparently heartily. What did all these people say of the ministerial crisis?

The Orleanist and Legitimist exulted in the fall of the Liberals and Palmerston, and willingly gave them a helping kick to perdition as they thought.

The Elyséan organs either held their tongue or expressed their satisfaction at the fall of the Liberals and Palmerston. Havas's Bulletin, an official sort of document which goes to all the prefects and the departmental press, rejoiced in the fall of Palmerston, whom it abused pretty considerably.

The Republican organs, the *Siècle*, *Presse*, *National*, etc., all lamented in sincere accents the resignation of the Liberals and Palmerston, and expressed wishes for their return to power. The Red Republican journals uttered the same opinions and desires.

These two latter are decidedly the journals that regard England with the most favourable eye. So you see which of your friends sympathise with you when they imagine you need sympathy.

Now—

The Republican Party most ardently desire the alliance of England on Liberal and Palmerstonian principles.

They say, "Let us be allies. Then war is impossible, for England and France will effectually hold the rest of Europe in check. We wish for peace. Your alliance ensures peace. By peace we profit. For our profit we desire your alliance. By ten years' peace we win more stability, respect, and prosperity than by the *Times'* ten Italian campaigns, such as that which young Napoleon so gloriously achieved.

"If we have not your alliance: if you allow Austria and reaction to come down upon us, then look to it whom it concerns. We will let loose the bear. We raise the Drapeau Rouge, and, in the present state, Europe, let us see who will do most harm—Austria or we? Tempt not a desperate man.

"We desire no territorial aggrandisement. We, indeed,

heartily wish you would give us a port in India for the benefit and shelter of our trade ; we wish you would allow us a settlement in Madagascar. On the other hand, we are perfectly willing to concede to you the entire freedom of the Isthmus of Suez and any other favours you may ask of us and to help you in every way in the best spirit.

"We, for instance, wish for the freedom of the Republic of Venice. But if Sicily ever escape from her yoke, we have no objection to your domination in that island.

"Tell us what we can do for you and show us what you can do for us."

Such, my dear father, are the words of the most distinguished Republicans of France. What do you think of them ?

This is by no means a full exposé, but really I have written already at some length, and I am afraid of wearying you who are so much occupied. Pardon my imperfect attempts at condensation and the unworthy manner in which I treat the great subject and the great interests I am dealing with.

Sadly and seriously, every day I am newly impressed with the importance of my position here, and I am convinced that with caution and energy I may play a most important, though quiet, rôle in cementing the alliance of England and France.

I have never yet mentioned what I hope you have given me credit for, viz. that in dealing with men of all parties, I have never committed myself to any, strictly reserving myself within the bounds you prescribed for me when you bid me be a "Benevolent Spectator." Frenchmen are very talkative, so that to observe a wise silence is seldom difficult. On the other hand, when I speak it is always, as nearly as it may be expressed, the truth. Very judicious honesty appears to me to be the soul of true diplomacy. My youth is greatly in my favour. Almost every one pets me, either because they really like me, or because they want to make use of me. In the first instance, people that are fond of me are generally more confidential on that account ; and, in the second, people that wish to circumvent me regard me as easily plastic, in fact as "soft." So that either way I profit. I shave scrupulously, and my good health gives me roses in my cheeks, so I look

like a jolly, good-natured English boy whose heart is readable in his face, whilst the position he is placed in offers some sort of guarantee for his head.

However, I have no more time nor space in this letter to draw pictures for you of men and of their sentiments and intentions. I must do so, however, in future letters, that is, if it be of any use to you. Hitherto I have kept it all to myself. But now that big results are beginning to peep out, I am obliged to write to you.

There are three Powers in France—the Salon, the Shop, and the Street. I think we can work round the Shop and the Street to our friendship, in fact we have them with us to a very great extent.

Damn the Salons.—Ever your affectionate son,

ALGERNON BORTHWICK.

PARIS,

(Feb. 1852) *Monday morning.*

MY DEAR FATHER,— . . . It's such fun in the Salons—foreigners don't and can't understand the complications of English parties, and above all they can't comprehend English feeling. The Salons all thought that Palmerston was dead—kilt entirely—they looked on him as a sort of *fait accompli*, and in their joy didn't calculate the chances of his coming to life again. They had got it into their diplomatic noddles that he was as completely disposed of as though he had been packed off to Nouka Hiva, Siberia, the Isles of the Blest, or the Devil. They now wonder at the tottering condition of the Ministry, and when they blandly ask an Englishman, "Who is likely to be Prime Minister?"—if he reply, as is generally the case, "Why, I think Lord Palmerston"—I assure you I don't know whether they looked most astonished or scared.

L. N. and a few others are the only foreigners that are at all aware of the position of men and matters in England.

It will be remembered that Lord Palmerston, after giving frequent causes of annoyance to the Queen by his excessive independence at the Foreign Office,



finally exhausted her patience by communicating his approval of the coup d'état to the French Government on his own responsibility. Lord John had gallantly defended his colleague hitherto, as may be gathered from the *Letters of Queen Victoria*. Now he could protect him no longer, and Lord Palmerston was called upon to resign. A few weeks later he gave his "tit for tat to John Russell" by defeating his Militia Bill, and forcing him in turn to resign. Lord Granville had occupied the Foreign Office during the interval: he was succeeded by Lord Malmesbury when Lord Derby<sup>1</sup> formed his government in February 1852. It was known as the "Who, Who?" administration, because the members, with one or two exceptions, were entirely unknown to the public. One of the new Ministers, however, was quite satisfied: they "had got a status at last," said Disraeli. The *Post* clung to the hope that the new Government would reverse the Free Trade policy of 1846, and restore Protection.

*Mrs Borthwick to Algernon.*

(Feb. 21, 1852) *Sunday night.*

. . . . Lord Derby has been sent for from the country: he is to be with the Queen to-morrow at 2 o'clock. . . . It is said that Lord Derby and Lord Palmerston would join: there is the Court against Lord P.; then the House of Commons and the country are all for him, and their power is greater than the Court.

*Monday morning.*

Your Papa went to Carlton Gardens<sup>2</sup> last night. . . . Lord P. will not object to join Lord Derby: they, however, have not seen one another yet. It appears that some months ago Lord Derby had asked Sir Stratford Canning to be F.

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Stanley succeeded to the earldom in November 1851.

<sup>2</sup> Then Lord Palmerston's house.



Secretary<sup>1</sup> when he should come into office; now it seems a difficulty in Lord Derby's way to get rid of him. . . . Your Papa came home this morning about 3 o'clock still feeling exceedingly sick, with a burning thirst. . . . After all it is the mind . . . the constant anxiety that he has had for some time on money matters has tended greatly to produce this illness. . . .

22 Feb. 1852.<sup>2</sup>

. . . . Your Papa has got a low intermitting fever. . . . He says there is little doubt that Lord Derby will form a Ministry—that Lord P. will not join him *at present*—that without Lord P. the Derby ministry will not last long. The Peelites will have nothing to say to the Protectionists.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "February 19. Lady Derby asked Lady Malmesbury whether I should not prefer the Foreign Office to the Colonial which he offered me last year at the crisis, as she thought it might be arranged if I wished it.

"21. . . . I am very unwilling to (accept the Foreign Office) as it will keep me in London the whole year.

"23. . . . Lord Derby had sounded Sir Stratford last year about taking the Foreign Office, when he jumped at the appointment, but on reflection, after the long antagonism between him and the Emperor of Russia, it would have been looked on as an insult by Nicholas. Sir Stratford will never forgive me for being the innocent cause of this apparent slight" (*Memoirs of an ex-Minister*, by the Earl of Malmesbury).

<sup>2</sup> "February 22. Lord Derby had an audience with the Queen, and accepted the government. He proposed me as Foreign Secretary. H.M. also agreed to Lord Palmerston taking office again, but not to lead the House of Commons. Lord Palmerston had written to Lord Derby yesterday, offering to open communications with him; so, on his return from the Palace, Lord Derby wrote to ask him to call. I was with him when the answer came saying that Lord Palmerston would come immediately. I then went to the Carlton Club, whence I saw Lord Palmerston passing our window, with his jaunty air, towards St James Square. I returned to Lord Derby's at 9 p.m., and have arranged many of the appointments with him, Disraeli recommending the names of the members of the House of Commons.

"February 23. Lord Palmerston refuses to join Lord Derby on account of Protection" (*Memoirs of an ex-Minister*).

<sup>3</sup> "It was the Peelites who had now been thrown into the case of a dubious third party. . . . Mr Gladstone insisted that their duty was to hold themselves clear and free from Whig and Derbyite alike" (*Life of Gladstone*, i. 418). Lord Aberdeen and Sir J. Graham inclined towards Lord John Russell. The Duke of Newcastle desired to create a new and separate Party. Sidney Herbert and some others were not unwilling to join Lord Derby, but found a stumbling-block in the anticipated reversal of the policy of Free Trade.—*Ib.*

*T. B. Crompton to Peter Borthwick.*

Feb. 25, 1852.

I am growing a little impatient at not hearing from you. Pray have you brought matters to a conclusion with Sir John<sup>1</sup> or the other parties? Tell me if you can confidentially whether our Lancashire Lord<sup>2</sup> endeavoured to enlist Lord Palmerston, and if so, what was the stumbling-block. I am not sufficient politician to discover why he should not have occupied his old post which every party thinks him incomparably the best man for. Is it as I understand you to say that he had reasonable expectations to have been honoured by a call from Her Majesty?

*The Same to the Same.*

Feb. 28, 1852.

I am very sorry Palmerston could not join the present ministry. It leaves no other inference than that he feels convinced the country will not allow a duty upon corn; or is it that he thinks there ought not to be one? I hope not the latter, because my own conviction is that sooner or later we shall return to an import duty, and I am glad Lord Derby is acting with so much prudence. It will be a very hard fate if the landed proprietors of this country are doomed to meet the lowest prices of the whole world and pay their share of the National Debt created at protective war prices. There does not appear to me common sense or justice in this, nor do I think they will be enabled to do this without a fearful amount of ruin.

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.*

March 15, 1852.

. . . We are for our own doctrines of protection originally promulgated in the *Post*: we are not ministerialists but independent and honest and unwavering Postites. . . . It is perfectly clear that the so-called Protectionist—or Conser-

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<sup>1</sup> Sir John Easthope. More than one allusion is made in Mr Borthwick's letters to Algy to negotiations on foot with Sir John—presumably for the purchase of the *Post*. The issue is nowhere recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Derby.

vative—party is pledged to Protection: that is, to protective duties on corn, no matter whether these duties are levied for Protection or Revenue. Well: it is very right that Lord Derby and his Cabinet should not attempt to carry these protective measures in the present Parliament. But it is necessary to their character as statesmen and honourable politicians that they should make their appeal to the country as soon as possible. . . . Depend upon it Lord Derby is in an untenable position. . . . The country (must) make him speak out like an honest man and tell us whether he has deceived the country and is prepared in office to throw the principles of Protection overboard—or is what he was before. He says a bare majority of votes will not induce him to propose Protection. Why not, then, say he is a Free Trader?

This letter betrays the disappointment and disgust which Peter Borthwick felt, in common with many of his political friends, when he discovered that the leaders of the Conservative party had recognised that the battle of Protection was irretrievably lost, and that to raise the flag again was to encounter certain defeat. However, his cares in this, as well as in all other earthly affairs, were drawing to an end. His health was so seriously impaired that Mr Crompton generously insisted on taking him abroad. Algernon meanwhile had done so well in Paris, and so clearly proved his capacity, that he found himself at the age of twenty-two established as acting editor in London. It was recently alleged in his obituary notices that he for the first time turned the tide of affairs and dragged the *Post* out of financial depths. Without depreciating the good results which justified his appointment, it is only fair to point out that Peter Borthwick has been able to show an increased revenue as the outcome of his own control.

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.*

May 17, 1852.

As for the mode of travelling, I leave it entirely to the rest. There is an amount of expenditure very unnecessary, which Mr C. has now found out, that is from ordering the highest priced wines of every class. We *get* the vins ordinaires and *pay* for the premières qualités. At Clos Vougeot I ordered things: our dinners with wines (the best Mr C. said he ever drank) were three francs a head or fifteen for all—the price of one bottle of [the courier's] ordering. . . . Crompton is very kind and noble-hearted. . . . I have enjoyed a good night's rest and am to-day a very great deal better.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

May 1852.

. . . . The *Post* last week was £76 better than the corresponding week of last year. . . . Kit has gone to Portsmouth. . . . I must look after a school for Georgy. . . . Mackintosh<sup>1</sup> spoke of what he called the “three recognised Morning Papers” —*Times*, *Chronicle* and *Herald*. . . . There is a manifest combination against us.

. . . . Last week was £100 better than the corresponding week of last year. . . . I have nothing more fatiguing than to go to bed at 3, to be woke at 5 to write a second edition, and to be woke again at 8 or 9 to write a third. . . . I never argue at night; I simply decide. . . . The first short leader and the second are both mine. The intelligence came partly from Walewski, partly from Palmerston (with whom I get on capitally).

. . . . On Wednesday I received the following from Mr Inskipp:—“My Dear Sir,—I see that the *Times* and *Herald* have an advertisement about Exchequer Bills. It is a Government advertisement and should have appeared in the *Post* as well. It is very strange that Ministers cannot shew fair play towards their own friends. The reduction of interest is a matter of news and I have been obliged to notice it in the ‘City.’—Yours very truly,

H. INSKIPP.”

Not without reflection, I sent this to Disraeli, accompanied by the following:—

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Mackintosh took Algernon's place in Paris.

M.P.O., May 20, 1852.

SIR,—My father, Mr Borthwick, is at present travelling in Italy by advice of his doctors, seeking recovery from the effects of overwork. In his absence I am entrusted with the management of the *Post*. I take the liberty of forwarding to you a note which I yesterday received from "Our City Correspondent." I call your attention to it with the more satisfaction since on the day when the Exchequer Bill advertisement appeared in the *Times* and *Herald*, the former of these journals contained a most severe attack on Government and on the very next day the *Post* joined issue defending Her Majesty's advisers. We do not claim to be a Government organ and have in no way solicited Government patronage, but professing the same Conservative principles as the present administration, and having maintained them with not inferior consistency, is it strange that we should see with surprise Government advertisements given to a hostile journal rather than to ourselves? If to express this feeling be indiscreet, as my excuse I can but plead inexperience. For my pardon I will rely on your goodness.—I have the honour to be, your most obedient servant,

ALGERNON BORTHWICK.

The Rt. Hon. B. D., etc. etc.<sup>1</sup>

I have been much interrupted in the course of this letter, amongst other persons by Long, with whom I have just this moment had a long conversation which has terminated quite satisfactorily. He played me an evil trick to-day, but I do not think he will do so again. Wednesday is the Derby Day, and on Monday we publish Argus's prophecy. I have had an advertisement of this put in *Bell's Life*, and last night I sent down a letter to Long giving him the following model: "The Derby Winner. See Argus's prophecy in the *Morning Post* of Monday, May 24," and directing him to "write," say eight large copies and send them through Smith (who had promised that he would have them set up) to the railway stations on the Epsom line. I further told Long I would see him in the course of the morning and debate other measures to be taken with reference to the extra number to be pulled, etc., etc.

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<sup>1</sup> The reply is not forthcoming.

Well, this morning on coming downstairs I find five huge printed placards in the five office windows, and learn from Broadbridge that 200 placards had been sent off to be posted about town. I instantly had the horrible weekly paper-like-looking things torn down, and sent for Long to Earl Street. He was too busy to come, so I sent him a severe note telling him immediately to send out men to tear down all the placards that "on his own responsibility" he had put up, and requiring him to come to me at five o'clock. At five he accordingly came, and told me he had countermanded the order. I required an explanation of him. He said that he understood from me that I required publicity and he thought that he was carrying out my intentions. I will not trouble you with the whole conversation. Suffice that he fully understands that he is never again to "carry out" my intentions, but simply to obey my instructions. He understands me better now, and I am very glad that it has occurred, for it has given to both a proper position. We parted the best friends in the world, and I believe that everything will now go forward as smoothly as possible. The simple fact is this. He said to himself, "That boy is trying an experiment I don't approve. I can't prevent his doing it, but I will take care he shall have enough of it to sicken him." I have used the bills by instructing him to send them to all newsagents, and by putting plenty at the stations on the line of rail. So he finds that I will neither be rebutted nor encroached upon, and as I said before, the result is most satisfactory, for he is more deferential to me now than I ever saw him before.

I have plenty more things to tell you, but must conclude to save the post.

We all pray for your health and that of your fellow-travellers, to whom remember me most affectionately, and with kisses to Mamma, I remain, your affectionate son, ALGY B.

The foregoing letters show that the young editor was not afraid of responsibility, and that he had the will and knew the way to make himself master in fact as well as in name.



*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.*

NICE,

Sunday, May 22, 1852.

MY DEAREST ALGY,—Everything goes on most admirably. I am improving very much in health and so also is your Mama. She will think I grow fat again.

We left Lyons the day after I wrote to you, and slept at Valence—thence to Avignon, thence to Luc, thence to Cannes. We met Lord Brougham changing horses where we were engaged in the same operation. I recognised him and went to speak to him—he received me most kindly, wondered why I was travelling. I explained, and then introduced Mr Crompton. He, Brougham, said he was very sorry he was passing on to England, and that he had left his seat at Cannes the day before in order to be in England on a given day. Otherwise he would have been most happy to have seen us and to have asked us to stay the night at his house instead of the inn. On the following day we did not fail to call at his house and write our names in his book. The old butler gave us a glass of home-made wine, generous and fine as any I ever drank in Spain.

*Algernon to Peter Borthwick.*

June 4, 1852.

. . . . On this topic [politics] I need scarcely enlarge, as the paper itself is the best proof that I have maintained a completely independent tone, and I trust have taken right views. I will remark that with respect to the Ministry, I think that they are daily losing more and more and more ground. Derby's declaration that he believes that the country will not return a sufficient majority of Protectionists to warrant him in imposing an import duty on corn, is a plain declaration that he goes to the country totally unfettered by any Protectionist pledge whatever. The farmers are sulky, it is said, in the last degree. *Punch* draws Disraeli as a chameleon—on his back appears changing — Profreetectratidone. Malmesbury has acted most simply in the Mather case<sup>1</sup>—indeed, the best word

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<sup>1</sup> This gentleman refused to get out of the way of some Austrian troops marching in Milan: he pushed his way into the band and was wounded by a sword thrust.



to express his character appears to me to be "Muff"—hardly the thing for a Foreign Secretary.

June 14, 1852.

. . . . By the way, when this rain and cold set in most severely and dolefully during three days, our advertisements, which had been 10 and 11 cols., became 10, then 9, then 8, and lastly 7; while the *Chronicle's* dwindled from 9 to 8, to 7, to 6, and so with the other papers. The rain has now stopped, and our advertisements are again steady between 10 and 12. In spite of this, we did £69 better last week than the corresponding week last year.

I am very happy to hear of your improving health and that Mama is getting stout. Whether does Mr Crompton like Bourbon or Bonaparte best from the samples he has seen? Kit is well, and will write to you immediately from Plymouth. It seems uncertain whether the *Queen* will not be paid off altogether.

Everything is going on admirably here. I enclose an article from this week's *Spectator*—not a bad *résumé* of the situation.

The elections are coming on now and will prove a serious expense to us, as we shall have to obtain a short account of each from a local reporter. We shall be able to obtain the results by post and telegraph from the General Post Office, which offers to furnish them for £25 the whole. Of this I shall write further in my next letter. I am very anxious to save every penny. I have a plan which I will try, though I scarcely dare be sanguine as to its success. In engaging local reporters we must give them authority to communicate with the committees on the part of the *Post*. Now it seems to me that perhaps at elections, where money flows like water, as you well know, our reporters might get the committees to send their candidates' address to the *M.P.* as advertisements. If we could thus get but £3 or £4 from each election, we should pay our expenses handsomely and make a respectable profit.

If I can compass this, I will. I shall offer the reporters very handsome percentage, as our object will be not so much to make a great profit as to make sure of paying our expenses.

The *Post* is now so prosperous, that is, displays such elements of progress, that with the reinforcement of your pen and

the aid of your advice I am confident that after the elections, taking up a most bold and free policy and working and pushing the paper most carefully in every little detail, we shall soon arrive at a most satisfactory result.

The next letter throws additional light upon the relations existing between the Government and the Press, and upon the principles by which Algernon was guided.

M.P.O., *June 21, 1852.*

MY DEAR FATHER,—I have just had Mr P—— with me, sent "by a member of the Government." They are dissatisfied with the *Herald* and propose to place his services at our disposal gratis, together with Government information, etc. etc., and bid him go to Mr Borthwick with that proposal. I told him I would write and submit the proposal to Mr Crompton and yourself. He was anxious, however, that if possible it should begin immediately so as to lose no time before the elections, as the Government were anxious to have a good organ. I said, very quietly, that whatever my own opinions on the matter might be—whether they tempted me to accept or reject the proposal—I certainly would not act upon them, as I was left in charge of a very important and independent property, and such as it was delivered to me I must restore it on your return, unhampered either by acceptance or refusal of arrangements which, as they involved the most essential principles of the prosperity and character of the Journal, were beyond my interference in my present temporary office.

. . . . At Palmerston's last night, and at plenty other places, there were dozens of kind enquiries after you—Monckton Milnes, Molesworth, Mrs Norton, Castlereagh, etc. etc. etc.

Harriet and George and Kit (who is yet at Plymouth) are all right.—Ever your affectionate son,

ALGY B.

PS.—You understand that I left the question quite open with Mr P——, who, whatever his qualifications as a writer, is by no means a good diplomatist, as he let drop a very unwise expression. He said that "Government were desirous of securing a valuable organ and in the cheapest manner possible." Which was inadroit: in the first place, the expressions jar on

one's ear—they are inelegant in a negotiation of such delicacy ; and in the second they let a big cat out of the bag, which is, that we could get better terms than he was offering. As to my own opinion, I would not defend your Malmesburys, Derbys, Walpoles, etc. at any price, as a mere hired organ bound to praise their stupidities as well as their well-doings. It is our independence and our late attacks upon several members of Government that has made them feel our value. A. B.

HOTEL DE L'EUROPE, ROME,  
June 30, 1852.

MY DEAREST ALGY,—In the first place, your answer to Mr P—— was perfectly just, and in the second place, had I been at home it would have been confirmed by Mr Crompton's authority and by my own opinion.

You will perceive that Mr P—— comes from "a member of the Government"; he does not say what member. He proposes to write gratis for the *Post*, and to give us Government information, in return for which we are to give the Government our out-and-out support. This would indeed be buying a "a good organ cheap."

We have given the principles on which the Government was founded our cordial support. Lord Derby and Mr Disraeli both know Mr Crompton—every single member of the Cabinet knows me. Surely under these circumstances direct communication is at once the most natural and business-like.

But in any case you may assure Mr P—— that on no account would we receive any communications unless they were subject to the revision of the Editor. The Government may communicate with you directly if it seems good to them, but we cannot on such terms, or indeed on any other, sacrifice that independence of party and that strong adherence to principle which constitutes the character and the chief value of a newspaper.

You will therefore decline all negotiations proposed on authority so vague—and for purposes so disadvantageous to us.

I am further authorised by Mr Crompton to add that he would never on any consideration enter into any treaty thus anonymously proposed and sanctioned.

Love from all to all—all well—in tremendous haste.

*Peter Borthwick to Algernon.**June 23, 1852.*

. . . . The article in the *Post* about Louis Napoleon and the correspondents of the London Press is utterly repugnant to all principles of jurisprudence as well as of sound policy. Why is a miserable scribbler to be permitted to shelter himself under the English paper in which his slanders are inserted?

For God's sake alter this—I am sure Palmerston would not sanction it—and if he did even he would be wrong. Let the men write truth, and they are encouraged—as it is, let them be sent away by all means.

Will you call at Gray's Inn and pay my absent commons to the steward? I have neglected this dangerously long—it is very little.

I always forget also our dinner at the Clarendon—perhaps that may stand, but Gray's Inn is important.

This shows that Peter Borthwick was still capable of criticising sharply when he thought Algernon was making a mistake. About this time a gentleman who had contributed a poem to the *Post* considered himself ill-treated, and complained personally to Mr Crompton. Peter wrote home upon this, and on 3rd July Algernon sends his explanation, adding: "The only thing I regret is that I should have got a rap over the knuckles—from such a distance it falls the harder." The father's rejoinder was: "Your explanation is satisfactory in the highest degree both to Mr Crompton and me—you misconstrued my letter when you thought it a rap over the knuckles."

Yet shortly after we have: "Who headed the Dissolution of Parliament, the 'Prorogation of Parliament,' and introduced the same word *prorogued* into the descriptive text? It was a very terrible and very unpardonable blunder. A first-rate political paper should not be capable of making such a blunder. . . . It is very strange

that *Galignani* never once quotes a single leader from the *Post*. I notice this because Crompton is always speaking about it."

Algernon had his answer ready: "The Prorogation of Parliament was rightly headed: the Queen only prorogued Parliament on Thursday. On Friday night the decree of dissolution, dated Friday, appeared in the *Gazette* and in Saturday's *Post*. You are quite mistaken and the *Post* quite right."

HOTEL MEURICE, PARIS,  
July 29, 1852.

MY DEAREST ALGY.—We arrived here last night at 10 P.M., and we were disappointed at not finding a word from you either at Havas's or at Mackintosh's or here. I wonder why this is so, but at any rate we shall be at home to-morrow night. We shall leave this by the railway by 8 o'clock to-morrow (Friday the 30th) and arrive in the evening, I suppose at 11.

Now, Mr and Mrs Crompton go to Moile's, where they have ordered apartments. We shall go to Brompton direct.

Will you let them know at Brompton, and tell them either to have a cold shoulder of lamb ready for us—or buy one of Simpson's saddles of mutton—such as you used to describe, and let it be sent down and cold entire ready for us for supper. I suppose you can do this.

Now you had better do your *Post* quietly to-morrow, and then we shall have Saturday to ourselves with Mr Crompton. I shall send out to the Poste—but surely you did not write "Poste Restante"? However, I shall see. I shall look in at the *Post* for one minute as we pass.

Peter Borthwick returned to London and took up his work again at the office; Algernon went back to Paris. But the arrangement was not to be prolonged. In many of his letters from abroad, Peter Borthwick had spoken of the great improvement in his health; but there were also allusions to troubles in connection with money

which still disturbed his peace of mind. He was evidently much involved: several names were mentioned and suggestions made for meeting their demands, or using their good offices, as the case might be. He had evidently gone away a broken man, and he came home only to die. The end seems to have come suddenly on 18th December.

Algernon must have realised quickly and fully the unhappy plight in which the family found themselves and the heavy responsibility that had fallen upon his shoulders. From Mrs Crompton he received a letter which was no doubt kindly in purpose, but which might have reminded him of the Book of Job.

*Mrs Crompton to Algernon Borthwick.*

*Dec. 28, 1852.*

. . . . I am glad to hear no particular mention of Georgy, for, from his sensitive mind and delicate frame, I feared your poor mother would have had him seriously ill. You will soon have to deliberate well what must be done with him. A good education is a great blessing, but there are exceptions when food and clothing have to be worked for. . . . It is so much more easy to procure employment for the body than the mind that I have sometimes wished you had been a blacksmith's or joiner's son; in my own mind you would have worked out a great name and in time a great fortune. . . . I am much relieved to find that Mr C. has decided for you to manage the paper, though . . . . neither talent nor industry will do without experience, and this . . . . can only be produced by years, and you have numbered so few. Many I know will blame him. . . . Keep within your means. . . . Distrust the often false good, the sometimes moral poison in those words "keeping up appearances." . . . I (always) thought you must soon be the only support of your family. . . . I do not fear for you if you have not that killing disease debt hanging about you. It would destroy a Samson. I once watched it subdue and finish a frame as



strong as Mr Crompton's; medical men were puzzled by his sickness and examined his body after death, but could give no name to his complaint. I, who helped to nurse him, had no doubts; I knew well it was simply debt. . . .

Excellent precept, no doubt; but not very easy to follow in the case of one whose father had lately succumbed, partly to this very incubus, and who had inherited the anxiety of family affairs aggravated by inadequate income.

Algernon, indeed, had no lack of good advice to help him on his way. In the year of his death his father had written: "Had ——'s engagement been kept with me, the grisly horror which the doctors say is to ride me to my grave had certainly never attacked me, and that you may escape my fate, I request and direct that you find yourself in bed before two o'clock as a rule every night. This you cannot do if leaders are not sent up to the printers until after three." This was manifestly true and wise, but perhaps a hard saying to a very young man who must have learnt already that if he were to achieve any success with his paper, he must be prepared for heroic sacrifices of time and labour.

On 19th December Algernon wrote fully and with deep feeling to Mr Crompton upon his father's death: "On Thursday night," he says, "he wrote the last leader he ever touched. I came from the *Post* at three in the afternoon. I had not been in bed, and fell asleep on the sofa, and during my sleep, to spare my labour, he wrote for me."

*Algernon Borthwick to his Mother.*

*Christmas Eve.*

. . . . (Mr Crompton) said I might rely on his not selling it [the *Post*] whilst it did well, and that if it went on as it promises to do that I shall ultimately become proprietor. The circulation goes on splendidly. We are 4000 a week ahead of the



*Herald*, which used to be nearly double us. . . . We are 1200 a day in advance of last year. . . . Kit came up from Portsmouth last night. . . . He has been ill again, too ill to pass his gunnery examination. . . . I am going to apply for a gunboat for him. . . . I have very good letters from Georgy. I sent him a splendid greatcoat. . . .

On 30th December 1852 Mr Crompton wrote a long letter to Algernon Borthwick setting forth his wishes and intentions with regard to the future management of the paper. Mr Barton is to be relieved of his office as manager and given a three months' engagement as agent for advertisements. Mr Thompson is to have full control over business details, with power to sign cheques. Algernon is to see that these arrangements are duly carried out and to take over the general powers of Mr Crompton himself, who goes on to say that he gives up his personal superintendence with great regret and only because his business, both at the cotton and paper mills, requires his constant attention. He adds: "I know not what to say upon Lord Palmerston being in the new Ministry,<sup>1</sup> only I think it was as little expected by you as myself; but it quite satisfies my mind that men of much less calibre than himself are nearly all aspiring to office, and it is in accordance with my common-sense views that it should be so." He sends two enclosures for Algernon to read and pass on.

Enclosure No. 1:—

*Mr Crompton to Mr Barton.*

FARNWORTH MILLS, BOLTON,  
Dec. 30, 1852.

DEAR SIR,— . . . I now write in accordance with what I have expressed to you before, which is, that you put under Mr Thompson's management for the next three months the control

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<sup>1</sup> He was Home Secretary in Lord Aberdeen's new Administration.

of the office work ; that is, clerks, cash, supervision of all receipts and disbursements ; and during that period I wish you to devote your whole time and energies to collecting accounts, and soliciting for advertisements, to do which I have more than once heard you express full confidence in the result. . . . Please let everything within your knowledge be brought into the inventory of stock, utensils, etc., and all documents registered and placed under Mr Thompson's control. . . .—I am, faithfully yours,

T. B. CROMPTON.

Enclosure No. 2 :—

MESSRS TWININGS. GENTLEMEN,—Allow me to introduce to you Mr Algernon Borthwick, who, in consequence of his father's death, will have the entire management of the *Morning Post* for me. Mr Thompson will accompany him to give you his signature that you may honour his cheques on account of the *Morning Post* in place of Mr Thomas Barton, junior.—I am, gentlemen, faithfully yours,

T. B. CROMPTON.

Before leaving this period one more letter must be noticed. It will be remembered that Lord Londonderry's affairs had recently engaged the attention of the *Post*. Now Lord Hardinge had been appointed to succeed the Duke of Wellington as Commander-in-Chief, and Lord Londonderry undoubtedly felt himself slighted. He was consoled by receiving the Duke's Garter, but some papers had coupled his name with the names of Lords Lonsdale, Shaftesbury, and Egerton as possible knights, with not very flattering comments upon any of them.

*Lord Londonderry to P. Borthwick.*

Oct. 2, 1852.

. . . . With regard to my appointment to the Garter, I really wish the facts were understood and known to the public. I never sought for any favour or honour in my life. I have always [thought that to] canvass or petition for it was a prostitution of one's character and the gift. I coveted the

high offices in my profession which gave me patronage and the means of obliging and aiding many numerous friends. I had no desire for any selfish personal honour. If I deserved anything at all after more service from the age of 15 to 70 than any other British officer, I thought I had a claim to the former. But I was never subservient, and I was thrown aside. The decorations of the highest class from every sovereign in Europe with whom I was from services in contact have been presented to me, and the letter of Emperor Alexr. speaks for itself, as the General Orders of the Army by Sir John Moore up to the year 1810 when I went into the Diplomacy, as well as the Military Command in Germany.

Under these circumstances you have kindly proclaimed I should not be run down, but what is the case of the Garter, and what makes me care one farthing about it? Lord Derby offered the instant the Duke died his own Garter and Ribbon by H. My.'s especial command with the greatest possible pleasure and satisfaction as one of the most distinguished and bravest of the Duke's companions in arms, and it was the first Garter he disposed of. And then remember whose Garter it was; and then it surely would occur to every ambitious soldier that if anything in life was worth succeeding to it was the Star, Stall, and Banner of such a man. I will confess I should have been no rival with a Lord Lonsdale, a Lord Egerton, a Lord Shaftesbury *et hoc genus omne* for a Blue Ribband—with a drawer full of stars, etc. I never put one on. But the Duke's descending to *me* under the description and definition which the Minister of the Crown has added to it, does indeed afford me that solace which other unjust partialities (if things had been fairly weighed or dealt with) have given me acute pain.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE "MORNING POST" AND LORD PALMERSTON

THROUGHOUT the last fifteen years of his life Lord Palmerston carried on an uninterrupted correspondence with the Borthwicks, father and son. Nor were their relations only official and political; both of them were treated as personal friends and were occasionally guests at Broadlands.

It may seem strange that a paper which was avowedly Conservative and consistently advocated Protection, should have associated itself so intimately with one who represented neither principle. It is evident that during the life of Peter Borthwick, at all events, the managers of the *Post* had by no means abandoned all hope of seeing a reversal of the policy of 1846, and pinned their faith in this respect on the Conservatives; from Lord Palmerston they could have hoped for no assistance.

On the broader grounds of party ties, however, it must be remembered that Lord Palmerston did not belong to the hereditary Whig connection. He had been reared on the traditions of Pitt and Canning, and had held office under the Duke of Wellington. His place in history is with the Liberal party, but during the years between 1850 and 1865 the dividing line was not very sharply drawn. On the formation of each new

Government various combinations were regarded as possible and not unnatural: we have seen that negotiations were actually opened between Derby and Palmerston in 1852. Party animosities were too old and familiar a feature of political life to be capable of obliteration, but they were not identical with our own. Walpole and Pulteney had been bitter antagonists, although they had continued to be neighbours on the Treasury Bench. Between Pitt and Fox there had been uncompromising antipathy: but as a rule coalition was so easy that North and Loughborough are the only names to which we are accustomed to attach the stigma of political immorality on the ground of having changed sides. It was not until after Lord Russell's retirement in 1868 that an easy interchange of service became impossible, and that the followers of Gladstone and Disraeli could only sever their allegiance by a step deliberately taken, carefully noted, and not to be retraced. It requires a convulsion such as a proposal of Home Rule or Tariff Reform to rearrange the parties of to-day: then the severing of old ties is regarded as a serious responsibility; the exchange of the Carlton Club for Brooks', or *vice versa*, is as solemn and sometimes as painful an ordeal as the passage through the divorce court, and return in the one case is as little to be expected as re-marriage in the other.

In the middle of the last century it was not so. The ins and the outs abused each other roundly and did their best to hold or storm the fort; but it was never impossible for the assailant of to-day to be the ally of to-morrow, and there was not wanting the sudden transition of sentiment which may be observed in

learned counsel who find themselves alternately opposed and associated in the law courts.

Lord Palmerston did not present any antagonism to the cherished ideals of a party which claims to maintain the great imperial traditions. Chatham, who said that he knew he could save England and that nobody else could, was not an avowed Tory, but he was the father of "the pilot who weathered the storm." Pitt's disciple, Canning, called the new world into existence to redress the balance of the old, and his pupil Palmerston made the "civis Romanus sum" speech. He may have been a member of a Liberal Administration at the time, but his spirit and conduct might well commend themselves to a paper which has never been accused of Little England proclivities, and was destined to be foremost in proclaiming the "Imperium et Libertas" principles of the Primrose League. The *Post* always denied subservience to any Minister or any party. As Peter Borthwick said, it was Postite before all things; and as it has scrupled not to criticise a Unionist leader in subsequent years, so it was not tied and bound at Lord Derby's heels. Personal relations with a Minister were advantageous, if not essential, to the managers of the paper; Lord Palmerston's views on foreign affairs were generally agreeable to them; there was nothing to make the connection repugnant or difficult; and although he was neither a Conservative nor a Protectionist, he became their Minister, if they did not become his agents.

In order to illustrate the relations existing between them it has been thought best to include a few of his letters in a separate chapter, at the risk of breaking continuity and even causing repetition. Collected thus



they gain point which would be lost if they were distributed. It need only be added that they are written in a handsome, bold hand, easily legible. The punctuation is not precise, and nearly all nouns begin with a capital letter. The first communication appears to have been in connection with Peter Borthwick's Carlist activities in Parliament, long before he had anything to do with the *Post*.

*Lord Palmerston to Peter Borthwick.*

29 Jan. 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—I return you the enclosed with many thanks. You will see by the papers which I shall lay on the table on Friday that these Spanish Carlists are not to be placed in the power of the Christinos.

Before the change of ownership in 1849, he alludes to the use which Peter Borthwick has made of some information which he has given him: this suggests writing for the *Post*, but is no material evidence. Then comes the day of editorship, which is hailed in the following letter from Mr Crompton's lieutenant, who seems to claim some responsibility for the new appointment:—

*A. A. Fry to Peter Borthwick.*

Feb. 16, 1850.

DEAR BORTHWICK,—Well done, thou good and faithful servant of the human race! The *Post* of this morning is an honour to you, to me, to England, to human nature. . . . You are the Bayard of English journalism. . . . So solicitous was I to see how you would handle the red rag of the *Times*. . . . One thing and one thing only jars . . . the manner in which confidential communications from the Foreign Office are disclaimed. . . . I see in that passage a skilful use of the enemies' own weapons, but I miss the high tone of a fearless ingenuousness.



It would not be easy, in view of the letters which follow, to credit the *Post* with fearless ingenuousness if all confidential communications were indeed disclaimed and condemned. But such self-denying ordinance would have been an unnecessary act of purism. If the *Post* received constant inspiration from Lord Palmerston, he was not the only Minister who had dealings with the Press, or was to have dealings with it hereafter.

In his *Life* of Lord Granville, Lord Fitzmaurice says plainly that the "*Globe* was then" (during Lord John Russell's administration) "the habitual recipient of ministerial confidences."<sup>1</sup>

In 1855 Lord Granville was charged by the Duke of Newcastle with being unduly familiar with the editor of the *Times*, and although he replied with a spirited denial in a Cabinet memorandum, the fact remains that he had three years earlier deliberately used his intimacy with Mr Henry Reeve, who had influence in the *Times* office, with a view to moderating the tone of the paper, which was causing much annoyance and offence in Paris. Here is the reply, which admits the principle that Ministers and Editors share a common responsibility, and disposes of the proposition that there is anything immoral or improper in mutual confidences.

*Henry Reeve to Lord Granville.*

We are both (the Government and the *Times*) equally anxious to preserve the peace, but we cannot do so by your means. However, I will try and make ours as effective as I can, and endeavour to avoid what are called "irritating topics," though how a people that can tolerate Louis Napoleon can be "irritated" by anything we can write, I cannot imagine.

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 55.

That Lord Palmerston's connection with the *Post* was generally recognised is made clear by two sentences in Lord Granville's letters to Lord Canning<sup>1</sup>: "Lord John infers from the *Morning Post* that Palmerston thinks . . . ." and: "Palmerston told me this morning that Clarendon had complained of an article in the *Morning Post*. He (P.) had been too busy lately to read the papers." A similar sentence occurs in a letter written by Delane.<sup>2</sup>

The first letter of the series has to do with the Hungarian refugees. Lord Palmerston's indignation against Austria was undisguised. The Hungarian rebellion had not been suppressed without the aid of Russia. Some of the conquered leaders had taken refuge in Turkey, and their surrender was demanded. Lord Palmerston decided to instruct Sir Stratford Canning to urge the Porte to refuse and, if necessary, to give the remonstrance of England as his excuse. This extreme course was not adopted, and it was found possible by gentler diplomacy to get the demand withdrawn. But Lord Palmerston's prejudice was not removed. In the following year General Haynau came to London. He had won an odious reputation during the war, and was known as General Hyena. When he visited the brewery of Messrs Barclay & Perkins, the draymen assaulted him. Baron Koller, the Austrian Ambassador, demanded an apology; Lord Palmerston sent one, without awaiting the Queen's approval, and in it he gave the Austrian Government his private opinions without concealment. The Queen wrote him a sharp reprimand, but he was impenitent,

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. i. pp. 132, 147.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of J. T. Delane*, by A. S. Dasent, vol. i. p. 311.

and in a subsequent letter to Lord John Russell she complains that his reply "clearly shows that he is not sorry for what has happened, and makes a merit of sympathising with the draymen at the brewery and the Chartist demonstrations."<sup>1</sup> She was learning the truth of what she had written to Lord John in July: "There is no chance of Lord Palmerston reforming himself in his sixty-seventh year."<sup>2</sup>

*Lord Palmerston to P. Borthwick.*

8 Oct. 1849.

There can be no objection to the publication of this letter, and you may say that in addition to the ladies therein mentioned it is understood that the Austrian Govt. have imprisoned . . . the mother of Kossuth, aged 72 . . . and you might make such observations as may suggest themselves upon this unmanly war waged against Hungarian women and children by those Austrians who were unable to stand up against the Hungarian men until they had called in to their assistance an army of 150,000 Russians.

23 Jan. 1850.

I am sorry for the sake of human nature to say that I firmly believe the statement made by your correspondent that a plot was formed by the Austrian Government and its agents in Turkey to persuade Kossuth and the other chiefs to try to escape and then to murder them as they were making the attempt. . . . The under agent who was to be employed to persuade the Hungarians to escape and who at first believed it was a *bond fide* transaction, upon finding out accidentally what was to be the sequel, gave notice of the plot to the Hungarians and to the Turkish Government. . . . The only thing that can admit of a doubt is whether the plot was really meant to be acted out, or whether it was a contrivance of the Austrian Govt. for the purpose of deterring the Hungarians from attempting now or hereafter to make their escape.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria*, vol. ii. p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

The next letter gives a clear indication of the terms in existence between Lord Palmerston and the *Post's* great rival.

23 *June* 1850.

A copy of what Lady Palmerston said to the members of the House of Commons who presented the picture to her yesterday was given to your reporter, but I should wish you not to insert it at length but only to give the general substance of it, because I do not wish her to be the object of vulgar attack in the *Times*.

30 *July* 1850.

My notion of a currency is that it is a compendious representative of more bulky commodities, used for the purpose of rendering easy that barter of one commodity for another which is after all the real essence of all buying and selling.

A currency in order to perform this function ought to consist of something which has great intrinsic value in a small physical bulk, and such are little bits of gold, silver, and copper. But it may also consist of small things like little bits of paper, provided these bits of paper or leather or anything else of a like kind are easily and readily exchangeable for some real quantity of intrinsic value, equal to the amount for which those bits of paper profess to be a token. The difficulty lies in preventing there being more of this paper in circulation than can readily be exchanged for the real value which they represent.

Had Lord Palmerston been alive forty years later he would presumably have been a bimetallist; unless, indeed, he had in the meantime pondered further upon the mysteries of value, and discovered the pitfalls which lurk beneath every phrase and definition. Suggestions of this kind have always appeared easy and attractive to beginners, but not even Lord Palmerston's bold and masterful temper could dispose in such an elementary manner of the deep complications of domestic and international exchange.

7 August 1850.

Metternich said that Italy was only a geographical name; meaning that Italy was split up into many discordant parts. Austria is not even a geographical name: it is only a diplomatic expression which represents five distinct and separate nationalities — Austria, Bohemia, Galicia, Hungary, and Northern Italy. Geographical Italy has at least a common language; diplomatic Austria has not even that cement. It remains to be seen whether the aggregate constitution of the 4th of March 1848 will be strong enough to bind them together.

22 Oct. 1850.

As to the Pope's new Bishops in England, it is a piece of foolish impertinence which by disgusting the people of this country will probably defeat its own purpose; but we ought not to be surprised if the bigoted and ignorant Cardinals who now govern Rome have been misled by the accounts which they have heard of the progress of Puseyism in England and of the number of converts to Popery, and have been induced to think that nothing was wanted but a flight of Bishops to turn a large part of the population into Catholics. It is a curious instance of the weakness of human intellect to see a Pope, whose authority within the walls of his own capital is maintained only by the presence of foreign bayonets,<sup>1</sup> pretend to govern the people of England.

As to the Hessian affair, if you want to know how it will end go and consult Mad<sup>lle</sup>. Julie, the clairvoyante, for nobody else can tell; but somehow or other Prussia and Austria will probably avoid fighting about this or any other question.

2 Dec. 1850.

As to war, I still hang to the hope and belief that there will be none between Austria and Prussia at present. . . . That they may never quarrel and fight is too much to predict, but it must be a very serious point of difference that will bring them actually into the field against each other.

This letter and the one which follows refer to the situation in Hesse-Cassel. The internal affairs of the

<sup>1</sup> The French Army had entered Rome and restored the Pope's authority in July 1849.

Electorate were in serious confusion, and the claim to interfere gave rise to friction between Austria and Prussia. A solution of the difficulty was found at the Conference of Olmutz. Lord Palmerston's views upon future Austro-Prussian relations and his speculation on the character of the Emperor Francis Joseph are interesting in the light of subsequent history.

12 Dec. 1850.

If you publish it, I think you had better leave out the assertions as to the warlike propensities of the young Emperor of Austria. The statement may be true, but one would rather not proclaim the fact. The Emperor's wish for war, if it exists, will not sway the policy of Austria; and one would rather put forward the pacific tendencies which have predominated in the recent conduct of the Austrian Government. . . . You may state that by accounts of the 7th from Berlin it appears that the 10th of this month was fixed upon as the day on which orders should simultaneously be issued at Vienna and at Berlin for a reduction of the military forces of Austria and Prussia.

The circumstances of Lord Palmerston's retirement from office after the coup d'état in December 1851 are too well known to need recapitulation. The following extracts show him in an unexpectedly contrite frame of mind. Even if he were contemplating his "tit for tat with John Russell," he showed at all events no unreasoning spite or resentment; and the language in which he alludes to the Court, whence came his greatest condemnation, does credit to his loyalty and discretion.

Dec. 21, 1851.

The British Govt. from the first outbreak of the Revolution in 1848 down to the present moment has strictly adhered to its avowed determination not to interfere in any way whatever in the internal affairs of France: and as to the questions about political institutions, freedom of the press, and other matters



regarding the internal condition of France, the thirty-three millions of people who constitute the French nation are well able to take care of themselves. As to the communication made to you by the French Embassy, I wish you to abstain from saying that the British Government either approved or disapproved the course pursued by the President.<sup>1</sup>

2 Jan. 1852.

Your articles have really been most excellent, and you have beat *Times* and *Globe*. I think you are taking to-day the right line and that it will be best to drop for a time the special question of my removal, and in any remarks you may make on foreign affairs to take the more general view which you have opened to-day.

People get tired of a single topic if dwelt on too long.

4 Jan. 1852.

I return you with thanks this interesting letter. I am very glad you left out the paragraph which mentioned the Prince. It is a less evil for the country that any number of Ministers should be sent to the right about than that the goodwill and attachment of the people to the Sovereign and her consort should be impaired. Those feelings towards the wearer of the Crown are one of the cables which hold our monarchy to its moorings.<sup>2</sup>

The next letter with a little re-arrangement would afford notes for a speech on the establishment of our territorial army.

<sup>1</sup> "The opinion which . . . I expressed was my own. . . . Nothing passed which in any way fettered the action of her Majesty's Government." — Lord Palmerston to Lord J. Russell, Dec. 18, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Palmerston welcomed his successor (Lord Granville) with . . . admirable good humour . . . "spoke of the Court without bitterness, and in strong terms of the Queen's sagacity" (*Life of the Second Earl Granville*, by Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, i. 46).

Lord Granville had previously been Lord Palmerston's under-secretary at the Foreign Office when his good humour had not always been so admirable. His letters "show traces of the alarm which he felt not only at the peppery criticisms of his chief upon style, but at the still more peppery instructions with which British ambassadors were frequently favoured. . . . 'The clerks detest him' (he wrote), 'and have an absurd sort of fancy that he takes pleasure in bullying them'" (*ib.*, i. 29).



25 Jan. 1852.

. . . . As to our national defences, I do not consider an invasion nearly as likely as it was in the latter part of the reign of Louis Philippe, but it is at all times a contingency which may happen without any very long notice, and though it would be absurd to keep up a war establishment to provide against an event which may never happen, yet on the other hand we have neglected far more than is justifiable on any principle of common sense to provide in peace the means which might be called into activity for the defence of the country on the breaking out of a war. The danger would be during the first three or four months, beginning with the week in which the rupture might have taken place, and we are deficient in men, arms, and military position. We have no reserve force like the German Landwehr, the French National Guard, or the American Militia, and our only defence for some time would be a body of regular troops in all probability much less numerous than the invading enemy.

Lord Derby's Government came into office after the defeat of Lord John Russell at Lord Palmerston's hands over the Militia Bill. There is something in this letter which implies that Lord Palmerston was not above humouring the *Post's* Protectionist aspirations:—

22 Feb. 1852.

Lord Malmesbury is to be Secretary for Foreign Affairs. . . . The great question of duty or no duty on corn or imported corn must be solved, and this can only be done finally by a General Election.

When Ministers went to give up their seals, those of Lord Palmerston arrived, but he did not. At first this was taken to be a studied insult, but it proved to be nothing but a misunderstanding, as this letter shows. The incident is duly related in the *Letters of Queen Victoria*.

*6 June 1852.*

. . . . It turned out that what Lord John meant was that if I preferred going to Windsor by the cross line of railway from Basingstoke to Reading, the seals might be sent from London to Windsor to meet me. . . . I wrote to him immediately explaining the mistake, and requesting him to lay my apology before the Queen. This was done, and the apology was accepted.

*19 Sept. 1852.*

. . . . It is wretched folly to imagine that the French do not contemplate an invasion of England as an attempt to be made in possible contingencies, and this possible attempt is more openly avowed by the Orleans party than by the partisans of the present President, future Emperor. Nothing is so foolish in the conduct of human affairs as wilfully to shut one's eyes to facts that stare us in the face. Now in regard to the relations between England and France, there are certain moral and certain historical facts which Englishmen ought never to forget. The moral facts are that the French nation, with all their good and estimable qualities, and these are many, have . . . a preposterous fondness for what is called military glory. The historical facts are sufficiently indicated by the words "the Nile, Trafalgar, the Peninsula, Waterloo, St Helena." Now let any sensible and reasoning man put the moral facts and the historical facts together, and he must arrive at a conclusion almost as indisputable as that by which a man gets to four by putting two and two together.

This feeling is no doubt wearing away as the generations that have lived during the events above alluded to are passing off the stage . . . but if a nation is driven forward not only by the passions connected with the events of the day, but also by the passions belonging to the events of past times, reason and interest may vainly struggle to restrain them.

The people of England . . . without abating one jot of their friendly demeanour towards the French . . . ought quietly but perseveringly, energetically and without intermission, to carry on and complete those defensive arrangements which by their sufficiency would in the day of difficulty co-operate with reason and interest in controlling those passions which might urge the French nation to break the peace.

23 Sept. 1852.

I think you might make some useful observations on Lord John Russell's speech at Perth,<sup>1</sup> which was full of worn-out commonplaces with no obvious bearing on the matter which he professed to handle. . . . How does all this prove that further organic changes are necessary or would be useful? The inference is rather the other way, since where so much has been done, and such great contentment created, strong proof is required to show that more would be expedient.

5 Nov. 1852.

. . . . The Governments of Europe must take one of two lines in regard to the form of government which the French nation may choose to adopt. Those other Governments might deny the right of the French to choose their own ruler or form of government. They might say that treaties concluded in former times, interests belonging to the present day, and the likelihood of dangers in time to come, compelled them to require that the French should not be governed by a given family nor by a chief bearing a title (that of Emperor) connected with events which heretofore disturbed the peace of Europe and overthrew the independence of many of its states, and they might either send France, so governed, to Coventry; or they might undertake the task of forcing the French to receive another ruler with another title. Such a course would indeed be absurd and hopeless; the Coventry system intolerably inconvenient to themselves; the crusade would be as successful as Don Quixote's attack on the windmill.

But the Govts. of Europe having taken the other line and having resolved to acknowledge the right of the French to choose their own ruler and to give him what title they like, it would be not absurd but childish to stand out on a question of enumeration. . . . What can it signify to the interests of the Powers of Europe whether the new Emperor of the French adds or does not add a numeral to his name? There might

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<sup>1</sup> "The speech at Perth was an elaborate vindication of that policy of Conservative progress which its author thought was implied by the term Whiggism. . . . The favour with which (it) was received raised Lord John's spirits" (*Life of Lord John Russell*, by Spencer Walpole, ii. 158, note).

be some reason in their representations if they were directed against the numerals of his Army. . . . Did the French under the Bourbons before the Revolution of 1789 refuse diplomatic intercourse with England because the Sovereigns of England continued to call themselves also Kings of France? The French only laughed at our folly. . . . You were right in your remarks upon the hostile feeling of Austria towards England and everything English. . . .

With regard to the last paragraph, the Queen had some time before this written to the King of the Belgians: "Unfortunately Lord Palmerston has contrived to make us so hated abroad." We have seen that the tone which he habitually adopted in addressing or describing Austria was not unlikely to corroborate the evidence both of Sovereign and Minister.

*Dec. 16, 1853.*

The *Times* of to-day asserts that I have left the Government<sup>1</sup> because I am opposed to all measures of Parliamentary reform. I wish you would say in the *Post* that this is entirely untrue; that on the contrary I have been ready to agree to a very considerable measure of reform though I did not choose to be a party to proposing to Parliament measures of change which in my opinion went beyond the necessities of the time and which I thought inexpedient. You may add that it is equally untrue that my objections were not stated plainly and distinctly from the first moment when the measures to which they related were proposed and discussed. State this not from authority, but as what you have good reason to believe.

*25 Jan. 1854.*

I think it would be useful if you were to put into the *Post* the following paragraph:—

"We have observed that some of our contemporaries have endeavoured to connect the resignation of the Home Secretary with some proceedings on the part of the Court. Now we believe we may confidently affirm without the slightest fear of contradiction that the resignation of the noble Lord was the

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Palmerston withdrew his resignation a week later.

result of some misunderstanding between himself and some of his colleagues, and had not the remotest connection with anything on the part of the Court."

As was the case in December 1851, Lord Palmerston must be credited with determination not to secure any popularity at the expense of the Court.

9 Nov. 1854.

It would have been enough to have mentioned that we are going to Paris without adding that we are going to St Cloud, which is not the fact ; and there was no need of saying that it was on a visit to the Emperor.

8 August 1855.

General Simpson<sup>1</sup> in a private letter of the 24th July to Lord Panmure says among other things, "There is a paragraph in the *Morning Post* giving the exact strength of our guards, of the trenches, times of relief, etc. It is very disgusting to read these things which are read in Sebastopol some days before they reach us here."

*Algernon Borthwick to Lord Palmerston.*

M.P., Dec. 29, 1855.

MY DEAR LORD PALMERSTON,—M. de Persigny<sup>2</sup> tells me that M. de Seebach<sup>3</sup> bears to St Petersburg a message from the lips of Napoleon ; the gist is this : "I hope the Czar will see the necessity of acceding to the terms now submitted to him. Had I drawn up the terms they would have been more favourable to Russia, but such as they are I have given my consent to them, and will uphold them as firmly as England. I desire peace, but under no circumstances whatever of evil or good will I abandon the English alliance. Let the Emperor Alexander rest assured of this." M. Persigny brings with him from Paris strong impressions of coming negotiations and even approaching peace. Here the common opinion is with common sense all the other way.

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<sup>1</sup> General Simpson had succeeded to the chief command in the Crimea on the death of Lord Raglan.

<sup>2</sup> French Minister in London. This statement is substantially confirmed in Sir Theodore Martin's *Life of the Prince Consort*, iii. 407.

<sup>3</sup> Saxon Minister in Paris.

*Lord Palmerston to A. Borthwick.*

17. 1. 56.

By telegraph dated yesterday from Vienna, the Russian Govt. accept the Austrian proposals as a basis for negotiations.

Lord Palmerston communicated this news to the Queen under the same date.<sup>1</sup> It would be curious to know which of his correspondents was favoured with the first intelligence.

22 Oct. 1856.

You aim your blow at the wrong persons. It is not Austria but Russia that is at the bottom of the obstinacy and misgovernment of the King of Naples. Austria is behaving well and should not unnecessarily be attacked.

For once he is on the side of Austria. Mr Gladstone's famous letters of 1851, exposing the cruelty of King "Bomba," had produced no lasting results. In 1856, the treatment of political offenders was found to be so scandalous that England and France broke off diplomatic relations with the Court of Naples.

The following letter is almost a State paper on the dangers of invasion and the principles of national defence:—

19 August 1858.

It is of great importance that public opinion should be rightly guided in regard to the armies and navies of France and England, and your article to-day leads me to make the following observations. The reasons why the French maintain a larger army than we do at a less comparative expense are that the French army is raised by compulsion, that is to say, by conscription, and ours is raised by voluntary enlistment. A Government which has by law the power of taking 80,000 men every year from the population and of compelling them to serve for seven or ten years, is at liberty to pay them what it thinks enough for their physical support and is not obliged to pension them when discharged. A Government which raises an army

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<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria*, iii. 156.



by voluntary enlistment must go into the labour market and compete with other demanders for manual labour, and as the rewards of manual labour are much higher in England than in France, our army would cost us more in daily wages than the French army would even if both were raised by voluntary enlistment, but much more must ours cost us man for man, seeing that we go into the labour market and that the French seize their soldiers by force. From these causes also we are obliged as part of the inducement to men to enlist to give liberal pensions for wounds and disabilities and for stated periods of service, and if you look at the army estimates you will see that those pensions to men, besides half-pay to officers and pensions to widows and children, amount (I think from memory) to upwards of £1,200,000. But then the value of almost everything is in proportion to the cost of its production, and (setting apart the considerations of comparative national energy and courage, in regard to which it is not a national prejudice to say that an English soldier will always beat a Frenchman) it is demonstrable that the English army man for man is worth what it costs and is better than the French army in the proportion of relative cost.

First of all, when you take men by force and by lot, you take men as the lot falls and you have the unwilling, the nervous, the timid, the indolent in mind and body, as well as the active and daring: when you take those only who offer, you get only the active, enterprising and daring, and your force is composed of good materials. Then a man who has been taken by force often hates his position; the man who has come willingly is more likely to take an interest in it. Then again our men are much better cared for than the French as to commissariat and hospitals; and in two armies of equal numbers, the English would on the day of battle turn out a greater number in the field, and that number in better physical condition than the French. Notwithstanding all that has been said about our Crimean campaigns it is perfectly well known that the sufferings and losses of the French army during the Russian war greatly exceeded those of our army.

Then as to promotion from the ranks: of course when men from all classes of society are compelled to begin in the ranks you will find in the ranks numbers of men fit by their educa-



tion and social position to be officers, but it does not follow that when the ranks are filled from the peasantry and operatives of a nation you will equally find among the ranks men fitted to fill the position and perform the duties of officers, and it is well known that men who have become sergeants and have for good service been made ensigns, have never been happy until they could sell their ensigncy and retire to private life on their natural level with the produce of their commission. Men can never be really happy who in their middle age are placed in a social circle either much above or much below that in which they have been brought up and to which all their habits have been formed.

As to Cherbourg, we ought not to underrate its importance as a point of aggression against us, nor to mistake the nature of that importance. It is childish and absurd to represent Cherbourg as a point of defence for France. There was nothing to defend at Cherbourg but a fishing village; nobody would have thought of landing there to invade France or to march on Paris, even supposing any English Government so insane as to imagine that an English army could perform such an invasion. As to the naval resources of France they were elsewhere, at Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon; and those places, strong in themselves, are not made the stronger by the works at Cherbourg. The only value of Cherbourg and its only intention is that it is a secure place d'armes where a fleet and an army may assemble, and where sixty thousand men or more may be put on board ship with all their horses, guns and stores in twenty-four hours, without the possibility of interruption and with a chance of our not knowing it. They will, moreover, be put on board, not sailing ships and small vessels depending on winds and tides for their passage over; not in line-of-battle ships which, crowded with troops, could not fight their guns, but in large steamers built or fitted as transports and escorted by liners, constituting a formidable protecting force.

The whole armament would be on our coast, either at one place or at several, in a night or a little more, and forty-eight hours would be fully enough for the landing of the whole at the chosen spot, whether that spot were Ireland, or our dock-yards, or a point from whence London could speedily be reached. I have said sixty thousand men, but probably more

could be so sent, or at least that number could be followed by more. The military establishment of France would at any time furnish 150,000 men for a foreign expedition. We have, then, to consider what we have naval and military to meet and repel such a force. Our ordinary naval establishment in peace of ships and seamen scarcely gives us the means of intercepting or driving back such an expedition, and what we want is a naval reserve available at the shortest notice, and strong enough to man a Channel Fleet adequate to encounter such an invasion, which might come upon us within a week of the rupture. Sir Charles Wood<sup>1</sup> had made much progress in establishing such a reserve: it remains to be seen whether his successor has followed up his measures and carried them to their intended extent.

The French have 40,000 registered seamen liable to be called into active service whenever wanted; and they can bring by railway all their seamen from Toulon to Cherbourg, if they did not prefer bringing (them) round in line-of-battle ships. This then is the value of Cherbourg to France and its danger to us, and those who say there is no danger in Cherbourg because they saw no fleet there, are either geese themselves or take other people for geese. But what is the moral for us? Why, it is that we should well fortify our dockyards against sudden attack and that we should always have a good naval and military reserve ready to be called out on a sudden when wanted, but costing us as little as possible consistently with its efficiency when not wanted. Sir Charles Wood's arrangements provide the naval reserve; our militia system well organised and maintained gives us the military reserve. Nobody who really knows the Emperor will believe that he meditates a rupture with England; what he aims at perhaps is to be in such a position of superior strength as to be able to hold high language to England on occasions when the policy of the two countries may differ, and when he may wish to do things in regard to other countries or in regard to British interests which the feelings and opinions of the British nation would not be disposed to stand; and if once we were to

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<sup>1</sup> Late First Lord of the Admiralty. He was succeeded by Sir J. Pakington.

find ourselves reduced to a condition of palpable inferiority, we might have to choose between an unequal contest or submission to things which the spirit of the country would not brook.

But the Emperor is a mortal man, and the life of every man is uncertain, speaking only of natural events and setting aside, as it is to be hoped we may now do, all fears of violence. Who and what would succeed him? Would the then Govt. of France be as convinced as the Emperor, that peace and alliance with England is as important for the real interests of France as peace and alliance with France is for the real interests of England? The temper of that next Government in France might much depend upon the relative means at the time of attack by France and of defence by England.

These I think are the views to be soberly placed before the reflecting part of the nation, and the result is that we ought not on the one hand to be left defenceless by yielding to the foolish counsels of the Peace Party and economists; that we ought not on the other hand to be drawn by the alarmists into needless expenses for the present maintenance of an unnecessary amount of active forces, but that we ought steadily and vigorously to strengthen our permanent defences of our naval arsenals, and that we should spare neither pains nor money in organising efficient reserves, naval and military.—  
Yours sincerely,

PALMERSTON.

A. BORTHWICK, Esq.

Advocates of universal military service will no doubt prefer to think that Lord Palmerston's views would have become modified if it were possible to have them now.

28 Oct. 1858.

I am very sorry to read in the *Morning Post* of to-day an extremely bad and mischievous article about the case of Charles Georges.<sup>1</sup> . . .

Lord Derby's Government met Parliament on 3rd February 1859. They were defeated on 1st April;

<sup>1</sup> Arrested by Portuguese authorities for having purchased slaves on the coast of Africa.

a dissolution followed, and Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister. This letter refers to the Queen's Speech in February :—

The throw-off is awkward, beginning with the insignificant word "in." The blessing of Almighty God is said . . . to have enabled us to shoot down a certain number of runaway sepoy: this borders on the profane. India in one place is a great empire, separate of course from the empire of Great Britain, and a few lines further it is called a portion of the Queen's dominions. The Queen is made to speak of the clemency she *was* disposed to show, as if to imply that she no longer *is* disposed . . . and she is made to say the persons who *might* have been seduced into revolt,<sup>1</sup> which implies that they were not so seduced; it should have been who *may* have been seduced. . . . The universal introduction of steam power into naval warfare seems to imply that naval warfare is an ordinary and standing condition of things: what is meant evidently is the general application of steam power as a moving force to ships of war.

20 April 1859.

. . . . As to the second point, Lord Derby seems to have made a mistake, probably in the hurry of preparing for the prorogation, and put into the Queen's speech a passage which he had intended to suggest to his colleagues for their hustings speeches, exhorting the nation to send a majority to the House of Commons to support the present Government. This would have done very well for a passage in a speech at a contested election, but it is not usual for the Sovereign to appear before Parliament as a canvasser for a particular set of Ministers.

TIVERTON,<sup>2</sup> 28 *Apr.* 1859.

I think you separate Lord Malmesbury rather too much from the rest of his colleagues . . . and would thereby enable the Government to escape from their responsibility for mismanagement of our foreign relations. . . . You may depend upon it that Malmesbury has not sufficient weight

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<sup>1</sup> The Indian Mutiny.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Palmerston was seeking re-election at Tiverton.

among his colleagues to be the real director of our foreign policy: it is Derby or Disraeli who are the real directors and who have done the mischief. Their prejudice in favour of Austria and their undisguised dislike of the Emperor of the French have driven France into the arms of Russia for assistance against the plainly threatened hostility of England.

21 May 1860.

I see that in your paper to-day you have given the argument against the vote which the Lords will probably come to this night about the Paper Duties. But it is very desirable in the present state of affairs at home and abroad that there should not arise a quarrel between the two Houses, and I hope therefore that if the Lords throw out the Bill, you will not in the *Post* pursue the argument of this morning and encourage an agitation against the House of Lords.

The foregoing letter refers to an interesting constitutional issue. Mr Crompton had not lived to see the fulfilment of his dearest ambition, the repeal of the paper duty. He died in 1858. In 1860 Mr Gladstone passed a measure of repeal through the House of Commons. The House of Lords, as Lord Palmerston anticipated, threw it out. There was a great display of indignation in the Commons at this encroachment on their special privilege of imposing and remitting taxation. There appeared, however, to be no immediate means of counteracting the destructive vote, and consolation was sought in the passing of the following resolutions: 1st. "That the right of granting aids and supplies to the Crown is in the Commons alone." 2nd. That the power of the Lords to reject Bills relating to taxation "was justly regarded by this House with peculiar jealousy, as affecting the right of the Commons to grant the supplies and to provide the ways and means for the service of the year": and 3rd, "That to guard for the



future against an undue exercise of that power by the Lords, and to secure to the Commons their rightful control over taxation and supply, this House has in its own hands the power so to impose and remit taxes, and to frame bills of supply, that the right of the Commons as to the matter, manner, measure, and time, may be maintained inviolate."<sup>1</sup> Next year Gladstone outflanked the position of the Peers by including the paper duty proposals with divers others in a single finance bill for giving effect to the Budget, so that, as Lord Morley puts it, "the Lords must either accept the whole of them or try the impossible performance of rejecting the whole of them."<sup>2</sup>

This was of course putting into practice the principles laid down in the resolutions of the previous year; but emphatic and bold as the language of these might be, it was extremely improbable that the Lords would accept them with meekness. The Duke of Rutland proposed the "impossible performance of rejecting the whole of them" by moving that the Bill be read this day six months. There were all the elements of a grave crisis; but Lord Derby chose to avoid it. He repudiated the principles laid down in the resolutions and declined to be bound by them. He quoted authorities, including Charles James Fox, in support of his contention that the Lords were within their rights in amending a money bill; on the other hand, he saw no advantage to be gained by their Lordships in pushing their privileges to the utmost and manifesting an unconciliatory spirit. It was of course open to them to divide the Bill into two parts and to deal with them separately,

<sup>1</sup> Sir T. Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, p. 649.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Gladstone*, ii. 40.

but this would have the appearance of retaliatory action, and upon the whole he would advise the noble duke to withdraw his motion; which the Duke of Rutland accordingly did. The Bill passed,<sup>1</sup> and Mr Gladstone might claim to have outmanœuvred the Lords. But Lord Derby distinctly asserted the claim of the Peers to interfere at discretion, and reserved for them the full right to do so on any future occasion should necessity arise. This is a bare statement of fact, and it is not intended here to deduce any moral or argument from it, but it is worth noting as the *locus classicus* affecting a doubtful point. It is perhaps astonishing that for forty-eight years the dispute should have dragged languidly along without ever becoming acute: it is undoubtedly astonishing that we should live under a constitution in which so elementary and vital a question should have remained so long a matter of doubt and discussion.

27 July 1860.

It is said that at a late meeting of the shareholders of the Suez Canal Company<sup>2</sup> at Paris accounts of the Company were produced by which it appeared that a million of francs have been expended in the cost of the direction; that of this sum 500,000 francs had been charged for the journeys of M. Lesseps, a further sum for furnishing his apartment at Paris, and 400,000 francs for the salaries of the members of the direction, consisting of M. Lesseps and one or two associates. There would be no harm in letting this be known.

4 Feb. 1862.

You have gone much too far ahead in your article to-day about Mexico. . . . It is very undesirable that you should ever announce intentions on the part of the British Govt.

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 7th June 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Palmerston was never an admirer of the Suez Canal project (see *Life of Viscount Palmerston*, by Evelyn Ashley, vol. ii. pp. 325 and 339). He objected on the general principle that it would afford political and strategical advantages to France.



without being distinctly authorised to do so, because as will happen in the present case you will in such case be formally contradicted.

I believe individually that the French do wish to establish the Archduke as King in Mexico, but the matter has never taken the official and organised character which you have given it.

During the autumn of 1861 the unsettled and unsatisfactory state of affairs in Mexico had led to joint action on the part of England, France, and Spain. The line pursued by the President Juarez, under pressure, satisfied England and Spain, but the Emperor Napoleon conceived the project of suppressing the Republic and creating a Mexican empire. The Archduke Maximilian, brother of the Emperor of Austria, was induced to accept the throne; but he had undertaken an impossible task. His reign was blessed neither with stability nor tranquillity. In 1866 he appealed to France for succour, which was not forthcoming, and in the following year he was captured by the Republican party, tried, found guilty of treason, and shot. Of all Napoleon's ambitious schemes this was one of the most disastrous. Not only was it futile so far as Mexico was concerned; it brought ruin and death upon an amiable prince, and helped to discredit and undermine his own position in France.

*5 July 1862.*

I was sorry to read your leading article of yesterday. . . . It embodies the calumnies of Disraeli, the misrepresentations of the French Government, and the absurdities of the Polish emigrants, and was as objectionable as to time and occasion as it was as to its substance.

*14 Aug. 1863.*

I rather doubt Maximilian accepting Mexico without a guarantee from England and France, and that we cannot give though France would readily do so, and there is no good reason why we should object to it.

3 Apr. 1864.

You may like to know that the Duke of Newcastle has resigned on account of the state of his health. . . . We mean to take this opportunity to bring the Colonial Office into the House of Commons, and for that purpose Cardwell will take it, while we shall obtain the return of Lord Clarendon to the Cabinet by his acceptance of the Duchy of Lancaster.

These intentions were carried into effect, and it is a notable instance of the profit to the *Post* of its connection with Lord Palmerston. Such confidences enabled the paper to gain credit for the correctness of its forecast.

27 Nov. 1864.

I think that as head of the Government and a person who has always been ready to give authentic information for the guidance of the *Morning Post*, whenever I could properly do so, I have a right to know from which member of the Government your acting editor received that statement of intended naval and military reductions upon a considerable scale which was in the first place authoritatively announced in the *Morning Post*, and after, in an equally authoritative manner, repeated in answer to a contradictory passage in the *Times*. This is a matter which does not concern the *Morning Post* only, but upon which I am entitled to receive explanation. . . . It is vain to say that your acting man got his information from gossiping conversation at clubs. He evidently wrote from what he considered an authentic official source.

*Algernon Borthwick to Lord Palmerston.*

Nov. 27, 1864.

I have made repeated enquiry. I can assure you that no information, direct or indirect, was received from any member of the Government.

I am sure you will believe that no false delicacy could prevent my giving you frankly every explanation when you are so thoroughly entitled to ask it.

But I cannot trace either information or suggestion as in any way coming to this office from any one of your colleagues.

*From Lady Palmerston.*

PICCADILLY, *Monday.*

I find that tickets will be very much in request at the next Almack's owing to the quadrilles. . . . I will do what I can . . . but if any of the ladies wishing to go, visit any of the Lady Patronesses, they had better write themselves to that patroness, for we are surrounded by strict rules, and one of the first of them is that no gentleman should ask for any ladies' tickets, and that everyone is to ask for him or herself only, except mothers, who may ask for daughters. . . . The number of each lady are limited. . . . I thought by what you said yesterday that you were little aware of the difficulty of getting tickets, and if you write to different ladies they may very probably compare lists, so I wished to put you on your guard.

*From the Same.*

*Friday (1864).*

I am sorry to trouble you with a small matter, but I should be very much obliged if you would kindly explain to your reporter that I wish him not to mention the individuals of our dinner for to-day. I am quite sure this makes many jealous. . . . He might . . . weave up their names in the evening party. It seems to make a difference in the company, and I think it has a bad effect with the House of Commons Members, and they cavil at my Tory company. . . . It puts them out of temper.

*From the Same.*

*Monday.*

I sent away all reporters yesterday because I was afraid they might put in your paper some great flourishing account of our party: but now we are afraid that if nothing is said about it, this might look peculiar and appear as if we were ashamed of our company. Would you be kind enough, therefore, to . . . put in the list of our company at dinner (which I enclose), and then he might add that we had a select party to meet the General,<sup>1</sup> who all came very early, and the party broke up at  $\frac{1}{2}$ -past 11.

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<sup>1</sup> This presumably refers to Garibaldi, who was in London in the spring of 1864. He was received with enthusiasm, and the great personages of society, especially those of the Liberal party, delighted to honour him.

Lord Palmerston died on 18th October 1865. There had been a General Election in July, and his party had secured a renewed lease of office: perhaps it would be truer to say that the country had confirmed his personal tenure of power. He had never enjoyed the full confidence and affection of his Sovereign; he had at times lost to some extent his hold upon the country; but at the end it was as firm as it had ever been. His faults of rashness and excessive confidence actually endeared him to the people. His was not the popularity of a demagogue, nor the veneration due to a stately patrician; he was essentially the Prime Minister of the public; and he closed his career at eighty-one, the best-liked and most powerful man in England, destined to remain one of the most picturesque and admired figures in our political history. The following unsigned letter, presumably from a servant, is worth quoting if it be only for the sake of the last sentence, which illustrates the theory of "like master, like man":—

*Monday.*

My Lord has rallied a little but is still very bad. He has been in bed since Thursday night. He was out of bed by his own wish last night, but was quite helpless . . . he eats soups and sago, with a great quantity of brandy. He appears conscious, and asks me a question now and then. He is so much altered you would hardly know him. I hear Dr Smith has said he had a little hope of getting him round again, but I do not think he believes as he says. . . . I am in very good health considering all things, but feel as if they could give me too much of it if it goes on much longer. . . . Me and Bill backed Gratitude and Soumise for Cambridgeshire.

## CHAPTER V

APPOINTED EDITOR, 1853-1859

IN this memoir no attempt will be made to trace step by step the progress of English history and the complications of foreign politics through the leading articles of the *Morning Post*. So detailed a study would be beyond our scope, which is properly confined to personal narrative. But the paper exercised the predominant influence on Borthwick's career, and its reflection must therefore be constantly before our eyes.

The primary function of a newspaper is presumably to retail news, but the system has been elaborated far beyond that. An editor has not only to supply his readers with the latest and truest information, he has to furnish them with ideas. Every suburban train which disgorges its crowd of hurried office-workers morning after morning is an exchange for second-hand opinions. Few out of these many thousands have leisure, fewer still have capacity, to examine the facts at their disposal and to form on them a deliberate and sagacious judgment. For the multitude the leading article is the obvious short-cut to convictions. And this must be so. It is not given to every man to draw conclusions from definite events; rarer still is the instinct for weighing evidence and distinguishing between rumour and reality. It is the admitted practice of our countrymen to consider

themselves members of one political party or another, and they desire and expect to find the principles of their chosen party reflected in the leading articles which they read.

An editor, without being a hack-writer, presumably has a preference for one or other political connection, and desires on principle to lead and fasten public opinion accordingly. But even an indiscriminating public is capable of being shocked, and no editor, independent and conscientious as he may be, can wholly ignore those diplomatic arts and devices by which great bodies of men must be influenced and controlled. Furthermore, he has to regard his reputation for discernment; he must ascertain the secrets of Government day by day; he must decipher the signs of the times; and he must appreciate at its proper value the information which comes from his divers correspondents. When the case comes to be considered, indeed, it is a matter for wonder that any newspaper should retain unquestioned hold upon the public faith. The task assumed is so difficult that it would appear impossible that a Pope-like authority should be retained except with the least reflecting of mankind. It is notorious that nothing is less to be relied upon than the prophecy of a political expert in the region of domestic politics. The editor has a more comprehensive field of survey and therefore more opportunities for being wrong, and European history contains chapter upon chapter of predictions unfulfilled and aspirations disappointed.

When Borthwick, not yet twenty-two years old, was appointed editor of the *Morning Post* with full powers to guide and educate his fellow-men after this manner, Sir Hamilton Seymour was commencing the series of



conversations with the Emperor of Russia which marked the transition from the universal peace, promised by the Exhibition of 1851, to the European war that was to follow. The promise was false. So Lord Granville, when he entered the Foreign Office in July 1870, was assured by Mr Hammond that the Continental outlook had never been more calm; so the Czar's Hague Conference of 1899 was to be mocked by the war between his own Empire and Japan; so the pride of place in which we permitted ourselves to glory at the Jubilee of 1897 was swiftly followed by the first heartrending war known to the passing generation. Meanwhile menaces of war, so perilous that no editor could be blamed for proclaiming it inevitable, have again and again disappeared when all chances of escape seemed to be barred.<sup>1</sup>

To a position of so much responsibility Borthwick was promoted. Nor were his difficulties confined to questions of journalistic discretion. Mr Crompton was a typical Lancashire man of business; a newspaper proprietor by accident, not by inclination. He was not one of those ardent politicians or literary enthusiasts who like to possess a paper for the purpose of promulgating doctrines or the joy of seeing themselves in print. To him the *Morning Post* was nothing but an investment into which he had been forced and of which the best must be made. Borthwick was not troubled with many conditions; his instructions were simple enough in appearance, if the means might be found of obeying them—to make the paper pay. To write good leading articles, to be in touch with public men, to have an eye

<sup>1</sup> Pitt in 1792 saw no reason why peace should be disturbed for the next fifteen years.



for useful sources of intelligence, to possess the instinct for popular taste—all these he might possess in abundance; but he needed also a knowledge and aptitude for business details, a spirit of enterprise, and talent for organisation. The sale of the paper had to be extended.

Whilst these pages are being written a paragraph in the daily papers announces the retirement of an old railway servant who had charge of a bookstall on the Great Northern line more than fifty years ago. The entire stock, he says, never exceeded £5 in value, and the charge for leading daily papers was 6d. It was Borthwick's business to see that the *Post* got a fair share of such small demand as there was, and he cannot have relished this letter which he had lately received from Mr Crompton's nephew and partner, Rideout:—

. . . . On my way down I read the *Post*. How is it there are none to be got along the line of railway, not even at Euston Square? I asked for it, and the boy said, "We do not get that paper, sir!" Perhaps this is not under your control, but I only name it to bring the fact under your notice. You have mauled the *Herald*. . . .

Clearly Borthwick's position in the office, gratifying as it was to his pride and his ambition, and precious as a source of income, was not wholly enviable. We have seen that Mr Crompton had considered it advisable to rearrange some of the staff duties. There was, in fact, a certain amount of clearing out to be done, and this naturally provoked resentment. The aggrieved persons appealed to Mr Crompton, who at once referred them to Borthwick. He had, accordingly, to assert his authority. "You are young, sir, very young," wrote one

malcontent, with more truth than discretion, and the new editor was probably confirmed in his resolve to show that his strength was not to be measured by his years or his experience. Here was a matter of business, and that business not entirely his own; sentiment must not interfere with necessity. He meant to be master, and he meant this determination to be recognised. He had given evidence of such a spirit when he was in temporary charge: now he could act on his own authority.

It is impossible to contemplate with indifference the life of a man whose trials and difficulties have been many and sore, have been bravely borne and been finally overcome. It was on no turn of luck, no tide of favour, that Lord Glenesk floated to prosperity: in those days he was battling in deep waters and there was need of all the fortitude and patience that a man could command to bring him out triumphant. To the labours of his office were added the cares of his family; these he cheerfully assumed, and it is right that prominence should be given to his devoted sacrifices on behalf of others. He had no cause to complain of ingratitude. His brothers, at all events, admitted his authority and their own dependence. His mother writes this letter, which is curious by reason of the sudden appearance of Quaker phraseology: "Thou art now my chief solace and comfort, and I often think and feel that thy dear sainted father rejoiceth. . . . At no period of thy life had I ever sense but of joy and happiness in thee."

The following letter refers to Christopher, who was proceeding to sea, and to whom the Admiral at Portsmouth promises his protection.

*Sir Thomas Cochrane<sup>1</sup> to A. Borthwick.*ADMIRALTY HOUSE,  
PORTSMOUTH, Dec. 6.

. . . . I am glad to find you occupy the position lately held with so much advantage by your lamented father, and I hope you will use your best endeavours to keep us at *Peace*—for I know too much of the horrors of war to wish to witness them again. Should anything bring you to Portsmouth I hope you will not pass through without letting me have the pleasure to see you. I believe you are acquainted with my son, Mr Baillie Cochrane,<sup>2</sup> who is now with me.

In the midst of these labours and cares he can have had little leisure, and for that matter slender means, for private recreation; and there is indeed no evidence at this time of any social activity. That he was not very diligent in the discharge of these duties may be inferred from a note which he received from Lady Dundonald. She deserves our admiration as the heroine of a romance. The lovely daughter of Mr Barnes of Romford, she was destined by her parents to marry somebody else. The tenth Earl, having lost his heart and captured hers, gallantly flew with her to Gretna Green, where they were married in 1812. They went through the ceremony again for the satisfaction of their friends in 1818.

*Lady Dundonald to A. Borthwick.*

Perhaps some day you will recollect how very glad I shall be if Mr Algernon Borthwick would call and see a very sincere old friend. He promised—who does not?—that he would call upon me but he never came. I am ill and suffering, and the sight of the charming bright face would revive me. Let me have a line to say when I may hope to see the bright beaming happy (I may not say boy). . . .

<sup>1</sup> He became an Admiral of the Fleet.<sup>2</sup> First Lord Lamington.

On the other hand, it was essential that he should keep in touch with public men, and he did not allow the intimacies which he had formed in Paris to perish of neglect. He kept up a correspondence with M. Drouyn de Lhuys, who had been residing there since his abrupt departure from the London Embassy, and received from him gossiping political letters of which this is a specimen. It was written when Borthwick was only acting editor, but it illustrates the friendly and candid nature of their intercourse:—

*M. Drouyn de Lhuys to A. Borthwick.*

PARIS, le 18 Mars 1852.

. . . . Votre ministère ne me semble guère solide et, contre l'opinion de ce que je vois, je ne pense pas qu'il puisse aller jusqu'aux élections.<sup>1</sup>

Ici nous n'allons pas trop mal, grâce au bon Dieu, qui fait tous les soirs un miracle pour réparer les fautes ou les malheurs de la journée.

To set against these limitations he was brought by the nature of his employment into contact with authors and actors, and he could at all events indulge those tastes which find their indulgence in books and theatres. A letter from Charles Kean shows that relations of friendship long existed between them. Kean had been on terms of intimacy with the father, and these extracts may be given here in chronological order. The first is undated, but it must refer to the performance of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, given at Windsor in 1850.

*Charles Kean to Peter Borthwick.*

From the applause bestowed upon our efforts and the gracious message sent to me, in my capacity as Director, from

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Derby's Government had remained in office until after the General Election in July. They were beaten on the Budget in December, and resigned.

Her Majesty through Colonel Phipps, I have every reason to believe that this representation has afforded the Royal party equal satisfaction with the past. The most important event of the evening was, of course, Mr Bartley's<sup>1</sup> return to the stage and undertaking his celebrated character of Sir John Falstaff at the express desire of the Queen. He had lost none of his former power, and evidently afforded most marked gratification to the illustrious assemblage.

The cast of the play was, according to the talent now on the stage, very strong, Mrs C. Kean playing the small part of Lady Percy, and Mrs Keeley, Mrs Quickly; Keeley and Harley, the two carriers; Cooper, the King; Anderson, the Prince.

The play will be repeated at the Princess's Theatre almost with the same arrangements of parts on Saturday night, 14th, when Mr Bartley will make his first appearance after a lapse of many years. The evening entertainment concluded as usual with a supper for all concerned, and the special train now waits to bring us back to town.

A line or two relative to this communication that may be of some service to our cause on Saturday in to-morrow's *Morning Post*, Friday, will greatly oblige, yours truly,

CHARLES KEAN.

WINDSOR CASTLE.

*Charles Kean to Peter Borthwick.*

Oct. 29, 1852.

MY DEAR MR BORTHWICK,—I will answer your kind note by relating an anecdote which may in some degree bear reference to your remarks on criticism. When my father made his first appearance at Drury Lane Theatre as Shylock on Wednesday, 26th January 1814, the morning papers on the following day spoke of him as an ordinary and peculiar actor with many faults. There was no enthusiasm in their remarks and no acknowledgment of his genius.

Lord Byron spoke to the committee of gentlemen who at that time governed the destinies of Drury Lane, stating as his opinion that the finest actor of the age had appeared suddenly

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<sup>1</sup> George Bartley, 1782-1853.

amongst them, and that his fate ought not to be left at the mercy of the usual theatrical reporters, but that the heads of the Press should be called upon to come forward and personally criticise this great actor. They did so, and Edmund Kean's popularity and fame were at once established, and the theatre flourished.

You will now perhaps understand why I wished you to superintend the critique in the *Morning Post* on one of the finest plays that has ever been offered to the public.<sup>1</sup>

With many thanks for your past and present kindness,—I remain, yours very truly,

CHARLES KEAN.

*P.S.*—By the way it is scarcely "just" that two leading artists like my wife and myself should be passed over in a new play with only one line, and that the unprecedented compliment at an English theatre of being called forward amidst the greatest enthusiasm at the end of the fourth act should be omitted altogether.

*Charles Kean to Algernon Borthwick.*

29 Jan. 1859.

. . . . There is such a crush always for *Hamlet* that I am afraid it is almost too late to procure as good seats as I could wish. I am not very well. . . . I have been very hard worked with my forthcoming book of *Henry V.* This labour combined with acting six nights a week is almost beyond human strength. . . . But now and at all times, whether I am doing actor-manager or private gentleman, I shall never forget all your kindness and the aid you have afforded me upon all occasions, for which I am and ever shall be your grateful and sincere friend.

At one time Peter Borthwick had received some letters unsigned and undated and full of mysterious dashes. They seem to deal principally with financial schemes; but one contains an allusion to an effort to secure Kean's services for some benefit performance;

<sup>1</sup> *Ann Blake*, by Westland and Marston, was produced at Drury Lane Theatre on 28th October 1852.



incidentally it suggests that actor's salaries at that time were not always on so modest a scale as we are often led to believe.<sup>1</sup>

My whole heart and soul are centred on getting C. K. for the b—t (benefit?) . . . . I believe £100 a night after the —(?) would be easily obtained and gladly given.

A correspondence with another famous actor, Charles Mathews, shows that we are on no new ground when we find an actor-manager quarrelling with a dramatic critic. On 8th November 1853 Mr Mathews wrote to say that to save the *Post* from inconvenience he had decided to admit its representative as usual, and had met with what he deserved in consequence. Last season, he says, he protested against what he considered unfair criticism. Now the gentleman has written that he cannot recollect one joke in *The Game of Speculation*, and that he slept through most of the performance—which Mr Mathews justly observes is not a state in which a play may be properly judged. With "every respect and goodwill" towards Borthwick personally, he cannot allow his critic to be admitted again. Borthwick at once replied that he could not accept the principle that the man who was the object of criticism should be the judge of it, or have the right to criticise the critic. He should continue to send his representative to see new productions at the Lyceum, and if admission were refused, the whole case must be submitted to the public. The rejoinder of Mr Mathews was not quite so pacific as his first letter. He denies that he had made any threat, but perceives a threat in the language of Borthwick, and is quite ready to "meet him in public" in any way he pleases.

Borthwick at once sent a soft answer :

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., *The Bancrofts*.



*A. Borthwick to C. J. Mathews.*

"MORNING POST,"  
Nov. 9, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR,—I vow to you that I was very stupid when I read your note of yesterday. Your politeness may on this suggest that you did not express yourself perfectly clearly.

However this may be, I am glad to find from your note of to-day that there is no quarrel between us. I understood that you would not admit Mr —— within the walls of the Lyceum on any terms. You meant that you would never give him free tickets. Frankly, I do not see that that matters one straw. I should as soon dream of uttering a "threat" to induce you to give him a free ticket as I would to oblige you to take off your hat to him. Here, then, is an end of all dispute between us. There remains, however, your complaint. I will come and see the piece and judge for myself of Mr ——'s accuracy. You have some wrong notion about him, and I think you will find you cannot be in better hands. A newspaper is naturally jealous of control, but you have no doubt a right to call the attention of a manager to the articles of a critic if you think them unjust, and it is the manager's duty to attend to such remonstrance. You may rely upon my seeing that the dramatic criticisms of the *Post* are fair.

A letter of a later date on the same subject may be included here:—

THEATRE ROYAL, ADELPHI,  
June 1, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR,—One of the most gratifying circumstances connected with the last night in the old Adelphi is your handsome and flattering recognition of me and my efforts. Believe me, it will always be amongst those pleasing memories that make one's latter days pass lightly away.—Yours obliged and faithfully,

B. WEBSTER.

Besides the functions of dramatic critic, Algernon Borthwick appears to have reviewed books in the *Post*. The following letter from Abraham Hayward is undated,

and it is impossible to say to what literary squabble it refers ; but it certainly encourages such a supposition :—

ATHENÆUM CLUB,  
*June 18.*

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—I am much flattered and obliged by the prominence you have given to my article this morning. If you yourself had undertaken to review the book in the first instance, I feel sure you would have written about it pretty nearly as I have done.

It is the greatest social outrage that has occurred in my day.  
—Ever faithfully yours,

A. HAYWARD.

When Algernon Borthwick assumed control of the *Post* Lord Derby's Government, having "got a status," as Disraeli said, and held office for ten months, were making way for the coalition of Whigs and Peelites under Lord Aberdeen. Lord Palmerston's vagaries, which had culminated in his dismissal in 1851, were not so entirely forgiven or forgotten as to make his nomination as Foreign Secretary acceptable, but he was so far pardoned as to be appointed to the Home Office. To Lord Clarendon was entrusted the Foreign department, after a short and formal tenure by Lord John Russell. In 1855 Lord Aberdeen resigned and Borthwick's friend and favourite Minister took his place. Lord Clarendon remained where he was ; but, as Greville recorded some time later, "when Palmerston became Prime Minister instead of Aberdeen, he fell readily into the Palmerstonian method." The hand that signed despatches might be the hand of Clarendon, but the voice that inspired them was the voice of Palmerston.

Borthwick had entertained a very poor opinion of Lord Malmesbury as Foreign Secretary, and infinitely preferred the "method" of Lord Palmerston, whom he

persisted in regarding as the Minister of the nation and not of a party. The fact that Lord Palmerston had not been unwilling to serve under Lord Derby<sup>1</sup> when the latter attempted to form a Government in 1855 is an additional illustration of the difference between party distinctions then and now. To admire Lord Palmerston was not to label oneself an enemy to all Tories.

Borthwick throughout life was specially interested in foreign politics and took pains, as we have seen, to keep himself well informed. He was for many years in close communication with M. de Persigny, from whom he received a great number of letters. His connection with Borthwick was notorious: during the peace negotiations in 1856 Sir George Lewis attributed a statement in the *Post* to the French Ambassador<sup>2</sup>; and a few weeks later a small indication of friendliness is afforded by a note sent round as an act of civility, to give the first intimation of an event, full of hope and joy at the moment, but of nothing but mournful memory to us:—  
"L'imperatrice est heureusement accouchée d'un garçon aujourd'hui 16 mais à 3h  $\frac{1}{4}$  du matin. Sa Majesté et le prince imperial vont aussi bien que possible."

The Treaty of Paris was signed in March 1856. None but the most bellicose wished to prolong a war of which all were weary and none particularly proud. In fact, so anxious were the representatives to get terms settled, that their work was hurriedly done and left weak spots, which were soon to be detected. And apart from the natural apathy of reaction in France there existed a

<sup>1</sup> Greville, viii. 65, where Lord Clarendon says that it was he who dissuaded Lord Palmerston. Mr Evelyn Ashley says that Lord Palmerston declined because he would have no other Foreign Secretary than Lord Clarendon (*Life of Viscount Palmerston*, ii. 73).

<sup>2</sup> Greville, viii. 6.

body of opinion averse on principle from imperial policy and more than indifferent to imperial glory.

The paper *L'Homme* had published in its issue of 22nd September 1855 a letter agreed upon at a meeting of the "Comité International et de la Commune Revolutionnaire," and openly addressed to Queen Victoria. It was a savage protest against her alliance with the Emperor of the French, and its tone may be judged by the following fragments:—

. . . . Oui, vous avez tout sacrifié, dignité de reine, scrupules de femme . . . . vous lui immoliez tout aussi, même l'honneur. . . . Il a détruit votre armée . . . . tué votre prestige. Il est comme le démon, virtuellement criminel. . . . Que mérite-t-il? Soyez tranquille, il n'ira pas à Sainte Hélène. Aucun vaisseau ne rapportera ses cendres. La France ne le laissera pas partir; elle ne le laissera pas emmener; elle ne le laissera pas châtier à d'autres. Elle le frappera de ses propres mains. Il sera puni. . . . La vapeur du sang versé forme un nuage sur l'astre, un nuage plein de foudres. . . . Priez Dieu, Madame, qu'il ait autant de cœur pour subir la mort qu'il en a eu pour l'infliger. . . . A bas l'Empereur! Vive Marianne! Vive la République démocratique et sociale, universelle!

No sooner did the operations of war give place to the movements of diplomacy than a rift began to show itself in the Anglo-French alliance. As Mr Ashley puts it in his *Life of Lord Palmerston*, "France did not show herself so ready to support England at the Council Table as she had proved herself in the field."<sup>1</sup> In the words which he attributes to his chief, the fact was that in our alliance with France we were riding a runaway horse.<sup>2</sup>

The situation was complicated by the fact that Persigny and Walewski, the Emperor's Foreign Minister, hated one another: "Ce n'est pas par méchantesse qu'il

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Viscount Palmerston*, ii. 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 127.

fait ce qu'il fait, c'est par pure bêtise. C'est une pauvre bête qui ne comprend rien." Thus had the ambassador once spoken of the minister from whom he received his instructions.<sup>1</sup> To make matters worse it was said that our ambassador, Lord Cowley, and Walewski never spoke to one another except when business obliged them<sup>2</sup>; although success seems to have softened the heart of the Frenchman, because we find Lord Granville writing a little later to Lord Canning in India, "Cowley and Walewski are now on most mellifluous terms, which is lucky, as Persigny has lost all his influence with the Emperor."

"All the little I hear tends to confirm the notion that there is an antagonism growing up between the French and English policy, and that France and Russia are becoming more and more intimate every day," writes Greville on 23rd September 1856. And a fortnight later: "Clarendon told me that we had been squabbling with France and Russia, and that the persevering attempts of Russia to disturb the harmony between us had not been unsuccessful." Later on he learnt from the same authority that the Emperor sincerely desired to keep well with us, but his Government was continually doing things which rendered our acting together and cordially impossible. This assurance Lord Clarendon seems to have received from Lord Cowley and M. de Persigny.<sup>3</sup> In September Queen Victoria wrote to the Empress of the French: "Je regrette autant que V.I.M. les divergences existantes entre les vues de nos deux Gouvernements au sujet du Traité."<sup>4</sup> The treaty was proving ineffective to a large extent, owing to the disingenuous conduct of the Russians. They

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, i. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Greville, viii. 71.

<sup>3</sup> *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii. 215.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, iii. 207.

had agreed to restore the district and fortress of Kars to Turkey; this they delayed doing. Another fortress, similarly assigned, was indeed restored, but not until it had been destroyed. They then claimed the Serpents Island at the mouth of the Danube, which was within the district to be ceded; and raised a dispute over Bolgrad, which was not positively fixed in the maps. We had to send a fleet to the Black Sea to show that we were bent on the fulfilment of all engagements, and it was doubtful at one moment whether it would be possible for Lord Granville to go on his mission to attend the Czar's coronation. Meanwhile one of the Powers was threatening the peace elsewhere. In the canton of Neuchâtel there had lately been a rising professedly in defence of the hereditary interests of the King of Prussia, who at once demanded the liberation of all those who had been imprisoned after its suppression, in which action he was not discouraged by France.<sup>1</sup> We were not in entire accord with our ally, and it was desirable that matters should not be allowed to drift into a new state of conflict. In November Greville asked Lord Clarendon why the Russian difficulties could not again be referred to a conference of the Powers, parties to the treaty. He replied that we could not consent because we should be in a minority; Sardinia, partly cajoled by Russia, and partly from antipathy to Austria, would go against us. Meanwhile Walewski was writing to Persigny complaining of England's reluctance to re-assemble the Conference, adding, "it appears that Sardinia has not yet framed her decision."<sup>2</sup> On 21st November Lord Malmesbury was told by Persigny that the Con-

<sup>1</sup> *Queen Victoria's Letters*, 214.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, iii. 213.



ference was proposed as a solution of the difficulty, Sardinia being admitted on condition of voting against Russia. Prussia was not a party to the proceedings.

Throughout these exciting times Borthwick was alert in mind and body. On 5th November 1856 he writes to his mother:—

I was nearly off to Paris last night. . . . I don't think Walewski will be Minister a week longer. Persigny has gone off in such a state of mind. Palmerston is as firm as a rock. If W. remains, the alliance is all up. The moment is very critical. I have my passes all ready to start the moment I can.

Palmerston's "firmness" had made itself felt. Four days later came the Lord Mayor's banquet, and Lord Malmesbury records, "The corps diplomatique was represented by the Mexican Minister and the one from the Republic of Hayti, a black man. Such is the result for the second time of P.'s aggressive and offensive communication with foreign Powers. There is no man so pleasant in his manner in private life, and it is extraordinary that he should not be able to exercise the same courtesy in public affairs." So much for the "Palmerstonian method." This recalls the days when a song was current in Paris of which Lord Glenesk retained a copy and of which one stanza will give the character:—

"Si le militaire peureux  
Prend les armes à la canaille,  
Si Louis Philippe heureux  
Se sauve sous la mitraille;  
S'il agit en polisson  
C'est la faute à Palmerston,  
Et bientôt si l'on l'enterre  
C'est la faute à l'Angleterre."

If Borthwick was wrong about Walewski he was not without grounds for his belief. "It is whispered that



Walewski is no longer in the good graces of the Emperor," Greville had written earlier, giving as the reason that he had misled his master and allowed him to be "bamboozled by Brunnow into giving his assent to the Russian interpretation of the boundary line." On 21st November Lord Malmesbury notes, "Persigny told me Walewski is in disgrace." He had predicted his rival's speedy downfall to Lord Clarendon.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, at the end of the year Greville was able to write: "His Majesty will not part with Walewski, who, although of a moderate capacity, is clever enough to know how to deal with his master, and make himself agreeable to him, and the Emperor knows that if he were to change his Minister for Foreign Affairs, it would be attributed to the influence of England and be on that account unpopular." So that Persigny's propagation of disparaging reports was calculated to defeat its own end.

At all events Lord Clarendon's objections were overcome; the Conference was recalled at the end of the year, and on 8th January 1857 Lord Palmerston was able to report to the Queen that "the execution of the Treaty of Paris has been settled in a matter satisfactory to all parties." The quarrel in Neuchâtel was disposed of soon afterwards, not favourably to Prussia.

But Borthwick was not wrong in predicting that the Anglo-French alliance was failing. In another year the Orsini affair was to revive whatever animosity had previously been entertained against us, and he was soon to behold his countrymen throwing themselves with energy into the new levy of volunteers who were to protect us from a French invasion.

<sup>1</sup> *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii. 215.

## CHAPTER VI

1859-1861

AMONGST Borthwick's correspondents at this time was the Marquis d'Azeglio. Never in sympathy with the secret societies in Italy, nor with the men of extreme views, like Mazzini, he was more inclined to be fastidious in the adoption of means towards the end than was Cavour; he was not a knight-errant, like Garibaldi; but he played a creditable and picturesque part in the history of his country. He was of noble birth, an artist, an author, a soldier. After 1849 he became President of the Cabinet, and was a loyal servant of Victor Emmanuel. Later on he came officially to London.

As Disraeli had rejoiced at "getting a status" for his party when they took office in 1852, so it was Cavour's triumph to have got a status for Sardinia by her admission to the Congress of Paris after the Crimean War. Cavour was more far-sighted and courageous than d'Azeglio. He knew that this was only the first step in an arduous and crucial enterprise. The day was to come when the further achievements of Magenta and Solferino were to be discounted by the undesigned and undesired Peace of Villafranca, and he was to be driven into temporary retirement and the contemplation of suicide,—to be succeeded by the day when he was detected snapping his fingers and whistling for joy in

the streets of Turin at the news of Garibaldi's illicit arrival before Palermo.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile there were obstacles to encounter and destroy. When Parliament met in February 1857, Disraeli, inspired by Walewski,<sup>2</sup> attacked Lord Palmerston for being privy to an agreement by which France had guaranteed to Austria in 1854 the security of her Italian possessions. Palmerston denied that any definite convention had been signed, and repudiated the charge of complicity. A few days later he had to admit that such a compact had been made and that he was mistaken. In April the *Morning Post* published a copy of instructions which had been circulated to the Austrian diplomatic body. Cavour no doubt scented battle: he had met Count Buol at the Congress, and he knew very well that they were destined to meet before long in other circumstances. On 7th April d'Azeglio wrote to Borthwick: "Le document dans la dernière phrase contient une menace qui va plus loin que ce que nous avons cru pouvoir attendu jusqu'ici." Count Buol, he says, threatens severe measures if Count Cavour gives cause for displeasure at Vienna. D'Azeglio has no fears, because he is sure that his country's allies will give protection: "mais il est préférable d'éviter des complications inutiles et qui ne produisent que des victimes." He hopes that Borthwick will preach the principles of peace and moderation. Had all patriots been as temperate as d'Azeglio, the union of Italy might have been deferred.

In spite of his tumble in his recent conflict with Disraeli, Lord Palmerston's authority seemed to be

<sup>1</sup> *Garibaldi and the Thousand*, by G. M. Trevelyan.

<sup>2</sup> *Lord Malmesbury*, ii. 230.

inviolable. He dissolved Parliament and was returned to power.<sup>1</sup> Lord Morley says: "The mainspring of the electoral victory was to be sought in the profound public weariness of the party dispersions of the last eleven years; in the determination that the country should be governed by men of intelligible opinions and definite views; in the resolution that all intermediate tints should disappear; in the conviction that Palmerston was the helmsman for the hour."<sup>2</sup> The intermediate tints were presumably the Peelites, who, as a body, were dissipated in 1855. Mr Gladstone in resigning the seals then had frankly given his opinion to the Queen that she would have little peace and comfort until Parliament should have returned to its old organisation of two political parties.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the first three conditions were not entirely satisfied when Lord Derby came to form his Government in 1858. Mr Gladstone still hovered between two opinions, and in reply to the Prime Minister's overtures he wrote:—

For the reasons which I have thus stated or glanced at, my reply to your letter must be in the negative. I must, however, add that a Government formed by you at this time will, in my opinion, have strong claims upon me, and upon anyone situated as I am, for favourable presumptions, and in the absence of conscientious difference on important questions, for support. I have had an opportunity of seeing Lord Aberdeen and Sidney Herbert; and they fully concur in the sentiments I have just expressed.<sup>4</sup>

The last condition postulated by Lord Morley would no doubt have been granted by Borthwick, who never ceased to regard Lord Palmerston as the helmsman to be desired in all emergencies.

<sup>1</sup> April 1857.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 540.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Gladstone*, i. 564.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 578.

The following letter is interesting for two reasons ; in the first it presents a familiar and very popular member of society in the rôle which he filled fifty years ago ; in the second it shows us Borthwick battling for the interests of his paper against his formidable rival. Forty-four years later he was still protesting to the Foreign Office in the same spirit, and receiving similar assurances that no favour had been intended or would be knowingly conferred.

(*Private.*)

*Hon. Spencer Ponsonby<sup>1</sup> to A. Borthwick.*

F.O., Sep. 10, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR,—I hope you have seen that your remonstrance has had the desired effect. There never was the slightest intention of giving advantage to the *Times* or any other paper, and as soon as the proposed arrangement was pointed out, Lord Clarendon at once gave directions that it should be discontinued.—Yours faithfully,

SPENCER PONSONBY.

It has been pointed out that Borthwick had little time to spare for society, but that does not mean that he was living entirely out of the world. Lady Dundonald was not the only one of his friends that tried to draw him out and made him feel that he was not forgotten. The two letters which follow are from Lady Holland, whose husband, the fourth lord, died in 1859. Mary Fox, or Marie, as the name was usually spelt afterwards, was a French girl whom they had adopted, having no children of their own. She married Prince Louis Liechtenstein and died young in 1878. The date of the correspondence is fixed by the allusion to the Imperial

<sup>1</sup> Private Secretary to Lord Clarendon, now the Right Hon. Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane, G.C.B., I.S.O.

baby, which would place it as soon after March 1856 as a royal infant could reasonably be credited with uttering a bon mot—which can hardly have been in the month following his birth.

*Lady Holland to A. Borthwick.*

. . . . I hope you will forthwith put yourself down as a permanent member of Holland House, Kensington, and of No. 27 Faubourg St Honoré, and if you ever indulged in a trip to Naples, of Palazzo Rocella. I am sure Mary, your small playfellow, will not feel averse to this arrangement, for she has already remarked your absence with a mixture of anger and regret.

*Lady Holland to A. Borthwick.*

PARIS, April 7.

I called Mary Fox your true love and said, "Here is a letter from an absent friend, but you must guess before I give it you." "Petit cousin"—"no—(she meant Lord Henry Lennox)—it is not a relation." "Oh, then, Mamma, I know who it is—it is that gentleman who played with me, with a pretty face, Mr . . . . Mr . . . . Borth . . . . wick. . . ." Here we are in full peace! all calm in the political world, costumes, balls, fêtes, past, present and future, digested and discussed; the Imperial baby's last bon mot. . . . I am wrong; a great event has actually taken place and perhaps not yet reached you—the Cte. de Chambord<sup>1</sup> has been to Nervi, near Genoa, and called Marie Amelie,<sup>2</sup> Queen—and she has called him King! La France est sauvée! And then, we doubt about men being big children.

Mary Fox adds a quaint little epistle of her own:

Miss Mary Fox to Mr Borthwick. I wish to go to England soon, and I should like to go and pay you a visit and see where you picked that flower. How are you?—Good-bye,

MARY FOX.

<sup>1</sup> Duc de Bordeaux, grandson of Charles X.

<sup>2</sup> Widow of Louis Philippe.



We have seen that in a previous letter Borthwick had told his mother that Mr Crompton had assured him that if all went well he would eventually become proprietor of the *Post*. In 1858 Mr Crompton died, and it is not surprising that there should be some bitterness in the following communication. Lord Glenesk left it on record that Mr Crompton had always led him to believe that he was to be his heir and successor in the ownership of the *Post*.

*Algernon Borthwick to his Mother.*

Sept. 15, 1858.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I have a letter from Will Rideout which recapitulates his uncle's will. I am in no way named—and after adding scraps of news he is “faithfully mine.” I am very sorry for the disappointment, but I am too much blessed not to bear a cheery and hopeful and happy heart.

I have served Mr Crompton better than I have served God or you, but I have no doubt His mercy will always be present and I shall always be truly rich in your sympathy and smiles. God bless you.—Your affectionate son,  
ALGY B.

We have no means of ascertaining what sum Borthwick was drawing as editor, but it is safe to assume that Mr Crompton did not consider the state of his property justified him in paying lavish salaries. Borthwick, however, was not content with his position, and he boldly faced the possibility of buying the paper outright, which certainly establishes his character as a man of courage and enterprise. On 23rd September 1858 he wrote to Mr Crompton's executors as follows:—

DEAR SIRS,—Since I had the pleasure of seeing you I have attentively considered the value of the *M.P.* and the means of entertaining your proposal to buy it for cash.

I find in consequence of the kindness of a political friend, well known to you, that I may be able to offer you more



favourable terms than I think you could by possibility obtain in any other quarter.

I enclose a statement of the profit and loss of the *Morning Post* for the last ten years. This on an average gives only a profit of £1049 a year; and then it must be remembered that no interest has been charged for capital for the last seven years.

To take, however, the last seven years, bearing specially in mind that no interest is charged, the average profit is £2666.

You will observe that our great year was 1856 and that 1857 and 1858 rather tend to decline. I merely point this out to undeceive you if you imagine our course is necessarily progressive. Are you disposed to accept £15,000 for the copyright of the *M.P.*—the plant to be taken at a valuation? This with the debts must reach about £7000. . . .

After further correspondence he received a letter from the executors, which begins with an assurance that they have no intention of treating him ungenerously, and goes on:—

In any disposal or sale of the *Morning Post* you may rely upon what I promised—that is, that you should have a preference, and that if it remained unsold Mr Rideout would be quite inclined to make the most liberal arrangements. Your offer to purchase was so much below the value that we could not entertain it. If it is your wish to be the proprietor of the *M.P.* the price of the ex'ors to you for the copyright would be £30,000, of which £10,000 might remain on mortgage to be repaid at stated periods, and the book debts, house stock, etc., to be taken at a valuation. I make this offer *now*, thinking that in the possibility of new political arrangements it might perhaps be conducive to your interests. If you decline it, I request that the terms be considered strictly confidential, for I know that the late Mr Crompton valued the copyright at a much higher sum.

From these letters we learn that Borthwick considered that he had reason to be disappointed, and that he was left as a salaried official with nothing but a preference in the event of terms of sale being agreed upon; that

is, presumably, that the paper was not to be sold over his head until he had declined to purchase—which at present he did.

We also learn that even if the *Post* was not a flourishing concern, at all events it paid its way under the Borthwick control, which had not previously been the case. It has been left on record by Lord Glenesk that in seven years he paid off £27,000 on account of Mr Crompton's mortgage, and in two years more £8000 due to Mr Rideout. For lack of information, the details of these transactions must be left in obscurity; but this memorandum shows the profits of a later year, and certifies that a charge due to Mr Rideout was still being paid off:—

The profits of the *Morning Post* for 1865 are as follows:—

March Quarter . . . . .	£202 3 11
June „ . . . . .	4456 10 11
September „ . . . . .	412 18 3
December „ . . . . .	1890 1 5

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£6961 14 6

Deduct the charge due to W. J.

Rideout . . . . .	2000 0 0
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£4961 14 6

The £4961, 14s. 6d. to be apportioned as follows:—

To W. J. Rideout (two-thirds) . . . . .	£3307 16 4
A. Borthwick (one-third) . . . . .	1653 18 2

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£4961 14 6

THOMAS LANE COWARD.  
19 January 1866.

This is anticipating events; but let note be made that by this time Borthwick was assured of one-third of the profits and that his share was £1650—which probably

seemed a handsome income then, comparing small beginnings with great achievements.

In February 1858 Lord Palmerston's Government were beaten on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill. In consequence of the Orsini outrage the French Government had made what were deemed to be arbitrary demands for closer supervision and control over political conspirators domiciled in England. Walewski had spoken of our legislation "favouring their designs and manœuvres and protecting persons who place themselves by flagrant acts without the pale of the common law." Fiery speeches were made in France; we were publicly accused of protecting conspirators and assassins; a spirit of rancorous hostility was suddenly made manifest. Lord Palmerston returned no answer to the despatch which Persigny received from Walewski, but he thought proper to introduce a Bill for making conspiracy an act of felony instead of a misdemeanour. In a moment his popularity, which had seemed inexhaustible, and his power, which had appeared to be unassailable, were dissipated. A gust of rage and indignation swept across the country, and the public had no mercy on the man who, they believed, had betrayed them, and whom of all men they had relied upon to safeguard their dignity and honour. Palmerston fell, and Lord Derby formed his second administration, which lasted a little more than a year. He in turn was defeated on his Reform Bill, and dissolved Parliament. Borthwick's intimacy with Lord Palmerston may be gauged by the fact that amongst his papers there is the original draft of the address to be issued to the electors of Tiverton with the candidate's amendments and corrections. It is dated 94 Piccadilly, April 7, 1859, and

beyond its interest on personal grounds it reminds us forcibly of the comparative smoothness of political waters fifty years ago. There is no foam and fury, no talk of tempest and of wrecks: Lord Palmerston's address is long, but it deals with little more than the constitutional question as to whether the Government ought not to have resigned rather than dissolve Parliament.

Meanwhile Cavour had visited Napoleon at Plombières and compromised him beyond power of extrication in the Italian national movement: war with Austria was inevitable. The Pope, though he may not have known this, chose the moment to demand the withdrawal of the French troops from Rome, where they had been in occupation since Garibaldi's gallant failure in 1849; and Borthwick's continued connection with the Tuileries is proved by the existence of a note from his old friend M. Mocquard, who writes: "Je m'empresse de vous faire savoir afin que vous soyez le premier à l'annoncer." . . . The Emperor had confided to Lord Clarendon in the previous December that he "was dying to recall his troops and yet unable to do it. . . . The moment the French troops marched out there would be an uprising in Rome and in the Papal States. The religious party in France would deeply resent his exposing the Pope to any such danger, and as soon as the French went away the Austrians would march in and be masters of the whole country."<sup>1</sup> And there the French troops were to remain with one partial interruption until 1870.

It may be appropriate here to point out that nothing could be more unjust and untrue than to charge the *Morning Post* with having been nothing but a chronicle

<sup>1</sup> Greville, viii, 220.

of fashion. Borthwick intended it to influence and inspire public opinion, and he cannot be accused of neglecting opportunities of conducting it on that principle. It is true that personal intelligence was published in its columns, but a glance at its pages shows that they did not contain what we consider now a large element of social news; incomparably less indeed than we find in the *Times* and other papers to-day. If the *Post* notified domestic and personal affairs it did but anticipate a practice which has since become general and inevitable.

Borthwick's correspondence with M. de Persigny continued to be of great value to him. On 27th July 1860 Napoleon wrote to his representative in London something in the nature of a manifesto: "Les choses me semblent si embrouillées grâce à la défiance semée partout depuis la guerre d'Italie que je vous écris dans l'espoir qu'une conversation à cœur ouvert avec Lord Palmerston remédiera au mal actuel—Lord Palmerston me connaît et quand j'affirme une chose il me croira. Eh bien! vous pouvez lui dire de ma part, de la manière la plus formelle, que depuis la paix de Villafranca je n'ai eu qu'une pensée, qu'un but, c'était d'inaugurer une nouvelle ère de paix, et de vivre en bon intelligence avec tous mes voisins et principalement avec l'Angleterre. J'avais renoncé à la Savoie et à Nice: l'accroissement extraordinaire du Piémont me fit seul revenir sur le desir de voir réunir à la France des provinces essentiellement françaises." He then meets the possible objection that in spite of these professions he is increasing the naval and military resources of France, and proceeds to show that his naval establishment is something less than was considered necessary in the reign of Louis Philippe.

As for the army—in the late war “les étrangers n'ont vu que le côté brillant, moi j'ai vu de près les côtés défectueux et je veux même y remédier.” As to his interference in Syria, where Christians were being massacred (and where, by the way, he was to be supported by his old prisoner Abd-el-Kader), he was actuated only by motives of humanity, supplemented by the demand of his subjects to secure redress for the destruction of the French consulate and insult to the French flag. “Est ce que par hasard la possession de ce pays accroitra mes forces? . . . J'ai de grandes conquêtes à faire, mais en France. . . . Il y a là une assez vaste champ ouvert à mon ambition et il suffit pour la satisfaire. . . . Je désire que mes troupes puissent quitter Rome sans compromettre la securité du Pape. . . . Je ne demande par mieux que . . . les hommes éminents placés à la tête du Gouvernement anglais laissent de côtés des jalousies mesquines et des défiances injustes. Entendons-nous loyalement comme d'honnêtes hommes que nous sommes et non comme des larrons qui veulent se duper réciproquement. . . . Faites de ma lettre l'usage que vous jugerez convenable.”

The Ambassador thought that one use to which this document might be put with advantage was to send it to the editor of the *Morning Post*.

Persigny was now leaving England to become Minister of the Interior at home; but this did not interrupt his intercourse with Borthwick, who wrote him a remarkable letter on 12th January 1861 upon the situation in the Near East:—

MON CHER COMTE,—Je n'ai pas pu aller à Broadlands avant mercredi dernier. . . . Je lui<sup>1</sup> ai alors exposé votre

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Palmerston.



projet de solution. Achât de l'Herzégovine des Turcs par le Roi d'Italie et l'échange de cette territoire contre la Vénétie. Ce qui resulterait à donner—à l'Italie son unification et sa paix ; à l'Autriche la liberation de son armée de Venetie et par consequence la sureté de ses autres états ; à la Turquie l'argent qui lui est necessaire pour payer ses troupes et consolider son gouvernement ; à la France l'opportunité eventuelle de retirer son armée de Rome ; et à l'Europe la tranquillité.

Je lui ai démontré, comme vous l'avez dit, que cet arrangement pour être accepté devrait être proposé par l'Angleterre. Lord Palmerston m'avoua que de telles propositions lui étaient complètement nouvelles. Il chercha les cartes et nous en avons parlé pendant une bonne heure. Il finit par me dire, "Il faut que j'y réfléchisse et je vous dirai demain ce que j'en pense." Vendredi il me dit que, réflexion faite, il le trouvait a very plausible and very good scheme. Of course it would remain to be seen what difficulties Turkey or Austria might oppose to it. Et ce matin avant mon départ il m'a autorisé à vous dire qu'il en écrivait aujourd'hui même à Lord John Russell et qu'il soumettrait ces propositions au Cabinet à leur premier reunion car, dit-il, c'est une bien trop grosse affaire pour que Lord John et moi, nous deux, puissions en décider. Maintenant que faire ?

Everyone, he says, is away, and there can be no Cabinet for ten days. Would Persigny like to see him ? If so, he will start at once for Paris. But presumably the Cabinet found the "affaire bien trop grosse" for them to undertake, and Borthwick's diplomatic venture was thwarted. But this was not his only effort. On 2nd November 1860 Lord Palmerston had written to Lord Cowley: "He (Persigny) wrote me an answer in which he pretty well admitted that Borthwick had faithfully rendered the substance of what had been said to him."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Viscount Palmerston*, by Ashley, ii. 196.



## CHAPTER VII

1861-1870

A COMMUNICATION in foreign script seems to show that in April 1862 an attempt was made to influence Borthwick on behalf of the late Neapolitan Government. As far back as 1851 Mr Gladstone had commenced his campaign for the rescue of the political prisoners, whose treatment, he declared, represented the "negation of God erected into a system of government"—a noble phrase which, like most noble phrases, appears to have been borrowed.<sup>1</sup> Bomba was now dead, and Naples had been handed over by Garibaldi to Victor Emmanuel; but the political prisoners had not altogether disappeared. The document may have been a gallant attempt to cleanse the memory of the departed monarch; but it did not meet with much encouragement.

Borthwick by this time having felt his feet, was allowing himself greater freedom of action. A letter of March 1863 introduces him to a member of the British Embassy at Constantinople; though whether he actually made the expedition is doubtful. It says pleasant things of the bearer, but is more concerned with the charms of the new Princess of Wales, who had just arrived in England. Borthwick had indeed passed through a hard apprenticeship, but the prospect was

<sup>1</sup> *Garibaldi and the Thousand*, by G. M. Trevelyan.

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broadening out, and he was able now to indulge more liberally in the amusements of London society: we shall see in the next chapter how he combined this habit with his peculiar talent for journalism. Meanwhile the country was to pass through another phase of anxiety in its foreign relations.

Lord Fitzmaurice has observed that "the Schleswig-Holstein question was darkened by a vast mass of irrelevant learning."<sup>1</sup> It would be quite outside our province to elucidate it here. Briefly stated, what had happened was something of this kind. By the Treaty of London of May 1852 the integrity of the Danish kingdom, including the Duchies, had been guaranteed by the Powers. On 16th November 1863 Frederick VII., King of Denmark, died, and was succeeded by Christian IX. Next day Frederick, Duke of Augustenburg, issued a proclamation in which he claimed the succession to Schleswig and Holstein. Both Austria and Prussia professed to be interested in the settlement. The Emperor of the French and Lord Russell endeavoured to delay action; but in December the allies entered Holstein.

The story which follows reflects no great credit on any of the parties concerned. Lord Salisbury examined it very closely in the *Quarterly Review* at the time, and the essay is now to be found in the collected edition. Referring to a despatch circulated by Austria, in which the German States were also pledged, he wrote: "Does any Austrian or German statesman ever perchance take up this not very ancient document? And can the most hardened diplomatist among them repress a blush of shame for his country when he reads over again

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, i. 453.

this pledge so solemnly, so recently made, and so shamelessly forsworn?"<sup>1</sup> And he attributes the ruthless conduct of Bismarck in the ensuing stages to "irrepressible patriotism."

Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, had declared in the House of Commons that if any attempt were made to violate the independence of Denmark, those who made it would find that it was not Denmark alone with whom they would have to contend—words of encouragement which sounded bravely at the moment, but were found to be tame enough when the time for action came.

In February 1864 England proposed a Conference. Consent was obtained, but the first meeting was not held until 25th April; the Danes meanwhile gradually lost ground.

Borthwick throughout this series of events ought to have been on safe ground. On 9th May at the Conference an armistice for one month was agreed to. On the 8th the Danish Minister writes privately to let him know that this will probably happen; next day he explains in a further letter exactly what has been done. Amongst his papers is a copy of the Danish case to be submitted at the sitting of 2nd June: it is a pathetic and dignified document, confessing "His Majesty's most cruel disappointment" at finding that the solemn engagements entered into under the Treaty of 1852 were not to be held sacred, and stating that he was prepared, in the interests of peace, to accept as far as possible the new conditions proposed, but that there were limits beyond which Denmark could not go.

On 15th May Bismarck had laid it down that Prussia was no longer bound by the Treaty of 1852: it had

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, ii. 104.

been executed as between Prussia and Denmark, not between Prussia and the other Powers. In any case it had become void, owing to the action of Denmark. It may be observed incidentally that Lord Salisbury flatly contradicts this theory; "It was not a treaty between Austria and Prussia on the one side and Denmark on the other," he wrote;<sup>1</sup> "it was a treaty between each and all of the Powers that signed it."

Three days later Bismarck had written to the Prussian representative at Vienna a letter full of "irrepressible patriotism": if Denmark would not listen to reason, then Prussia was determined to demand the entire separation of the Duchies. He says something moral and correct about consulting the wishes of the inhabitants, but goes on that it only remains to overcome certain scruples of the Cabinet of Vienna. As an argument to this end, he bluntly adds that if they are obstinate, Prussia has definitely decided to act alone; and he finally observes that he has made sure of Russia's quiescence. A copy of these instructions found their way into the *Morning Post* office, and Borthwick need not have had much doubt as to how matters would end.

Denmark was doomed. The Queen had told Lord Granville in January that Russia had duly announced that no help was to be expected from her. From the first her Majesty had been utterly averse from intervention. Suffering as she then was from the crushing calamity of her private life, she naturally dreaded the fearful responsibilities of entering without positive necessity upon a European war. "Denmark is after all of less vital importance than the peace of Europe,"

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, ii. 136.

she wrote, "and it would be madness to set the whole continent on fire for the imaginary advantages of maintaining the integrity of Denmark. Lord Palmerston and the Emperor Nicholas are the cause of all the present trouble by framing that wretched Treaty of 1852."<sup>1</sup>

Counsels of peace prevailed. Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell, who were pledged by previous speeches, were supported by Lord Stanley of Alderley and Lord Westbury in the Cabinet, but the rest of their colleagues were against them. Their followers in Parliament threatened opposition: public opinion was decidedly adverse. On 22nd June the Conference broke up. The Duchies fell to Austria and Prussia, to be finally appropriated by Bismarck after he had successfully disposed of his ally two years later.

In the month of July the *Morning Post* came before Parliament, when Lord Stratford de Redcliffe called attention in the House of Lords to rumours in circulation concerning a threatened revival of the Holy Alliance for the control of the European situation. Lord Russell in replying admitted that a certain despatch had been sent by Prince Gortschakoff to the Russian representative in Berlin, and that it had been shown to Lord Napier in St Petersburg. In comparing Lord Napier's report with a document, alleged to have come from the original source, that had been printed in the *Morning Post*, Lord Russell could find but a very distant resemblance. It appeared to him that anyone conversant with the politics of Europe, either through courts or commerce, might have obtained such an idea of what was going on in the world as

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, i. 459.

would have enabled him, without seeing the original, to fabricate a despatch as closely resembling the original.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing to show upon what information Borthwick relied ; but even if the paper was brought to their Lordships' notice in an unflattering light, there may have been consolation in the knowledge that adverse criticism is said to be preferable to neglect, and that this time it was the *Post* that was "getting a status," had it stood in need of advertisement. Borthwick meanwhile had kept up his correspondence with Persigny, who was now out of office, but who continued to profess very friendly sentiments towards England. In his letters during the summer of 1864 these passages occur :

Je vous écris ces quelques lignes pour vous recommander de lire un discours que je compte prononcer à Ste Etienne sous la forme d'un toast à l'Empereur. . . . Je vous serai bien obligé de le faire traduire. . . . J'espère qu'il saisera l'opinion publique en France et ne sera peut être indifférent au public anglais. J'ai été un peu étonné d'apprendre ce que vous m'aviez dit de ce qui s'est passé en Angleterre, mais j'entends que tout bien considéré Lord Palmerston a agi sagement en renonçant contre son propre sentiment à pousser les choses à l'extrême. Si vous le voyez dites lui que je conserve toujours au fond de mon cœur l'attachement le plus tendre pour sa personne et le plus respectueux pour son caractère. Quant à vous, cher Borthwick, vous savez combien je vous aime et combien je vous estime.

Again :—

Je suis avec intérêt dans les journaux anglais et particulièrement dans le *Morning Post* les petites escarmouches des partis en Angleterre. J'avoue que la situation semble aussi embarrassée à ce qu'elle l'est en France à d'autres points de vue. Je me sens dans une position très délicate et assez difficile.

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<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 24th July 1864.



. . . Je n'accepterai du reste une position politique que dans le seul but de rétablir l'alliance anglaise en même temps que notre dignité, ce que me semble très facile, tant je crois connaître le véritable caractère du peuple anglais, qui comme tout les peuples libres peut se passionner outre mesure, mais est toujours accessible à la franchise à la loyauté et à la justice. Je crois qu'en quelques années les deux peuples doivent s'unir étroitement. . . .

Later in the year a grievous affliction befell Borthwick in the death of his admirable mother. Amongst other letters of sympathy came one from Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling, who had succeeded Lord Stratford de Redcliffe as Ambassador at Constantinople:—

I comprehend and sympathise with your deep affliction. It is the first great gap in our natural life. The past is gone: we have to struggle with the future. . . . As to your brother,<sup>1</sup> rely on me. Tell him to come and see me on my return. If a really good fellow, I will certainly get him on. If he has defects I shall do my best for him. . . . It must have been a great comfort to your mother to see and feel your position, liked and esteemed by everyone, with a good heart and an excellent intellect. God bless you, my dear fellow, and all this world's prosperity attend you.—Yours most truly,

H. BULWER.

Death was soon to make another gap, as irreparable in its way, in Borthwick's circle. He never ceased to be in close touch with Lord Palmerston. Amongst letters from Mr Evelyn Ashley this kind of message is frequently found: "Lord Palmerston wants very much to see you at twelve o'clock to-morrow at Cambridge House." Within a year (18th October 1865) came this note from Bocket:—

<sup>1</sup> George Borthwick.



*Hon. Evelyn Ashley to A. Borthwick.*

The sad, sad scene is over. I send you a few notes about it as I am sure there will be a great eagerness to know about the dear old man's death. . . . I like the truth to be said about a thing which is sure to be written about.

The years next succeeding were comparatively uneventful, and upon the whole prosperous for Algernon Borthwick. Ownership of the *Post* was not yet within his reach, and he was probably not content with his subordinate position, whilst he felt, and justly felt, that it was through him and his own exertions that the fortunes of the paper had been raised. The author of *English Newspapers* says that it was rising in favour with the Tory party, and adds, "Of three high-priced London morning papers the *Morning Post* alone was thorough-going and consistent in its Toryism."<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly it was not going to uphold the principles of Lord Russell and of Mr Gladstone, who took his place in 1868. By tradition and temperament Borthwick's inclination was towards the Conservative party; but it must not be supposed that Lord Palmerston was forgotten. Throughout life he continued to claim Palmerston as the inspiration of the paper he controlled.

If there was a lull, however, in the activity of his office life, his private fortunes were approaching a crisis of great and happy moment. Borthwick was fond of dancing, and he was physically capable of unlimited exertion. On one occasion he was known to have passed three nights together without going to bed, dividing his time between ball-rooms and his desk. It need not therefore have come as a great surprise when his friends learnt that he was engaged to be married to Miss Alice

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, 270, 286.

Lister. Congratulations upon these occasions are apt to be matters of form, but one letter out of many may be quoted as a specimen, because it came from a man who had not the reputation of saying smooth things:—

DEAR MISS LISTER,—Accept my most cordial congratulations. You have made an excellent choice. I have had a good deal to do with your fiancé at many times, and I never knew or heard anything of him but what was honourable, sensible, and good. I should be puzzled to name a man more deservedly esteemed in the whole round of my acquaintance.

Before going on to the new phase of Borthwick's life we must say something of the *Owl* newspaper, which owed its existence to his enterprise, and which was more than a journalistic joke.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE OWL

THE *Owl* created such a sensation at the time of its publication and still retains so lively an interest for those who are old enough to remember its career, that it is worth while paying it attention in some detail. Two questions present themselves: what was the *Owl* and who were the Owls? In the obituary notice of Lord Glenesk which appeared in the *Morning Post* we find his own version of the story, taken down by one who heard him tell it not long before he died.

“Who were the Owls? Evelyn Ashley, Lord Wharncliffe, Stuart Wortley,<sup>1</sup> and myself; others wrote for us later, such as Laurence Oliphant and Drummond Wolff, but we really started the paper. How did it come about? Well, Evelyn Ashley, Stuart Wortley and I went to the Crystal Palace one night to see the Garibaldi celebrations; we dined there, and there was much brilliant talk. We all sparkled, and I sparkled particularly, so that one of them said to me, ‘This is too good to be lost. Why don’t you publish it and bring out a paper?’ ‘Very well; I will,’ I said, and so we brought out the first copy of the *Owl*. The night of its first appearance, we all went to a party at Lady Wharncliffe’s and found everyone talking about the new paper and

<sup>1</sup> Hon. James Stuart Wortley, Lord Wharncliffe’s brother.

wondering at the news it contained and how it got it. Sometimes we did not publish it for a fortnight or six weeks, and we asked people not to buy it. We told them they only bought a copy to be fashionable and that they did not really understand it, and that it was not written for them: of course they bought it all the more. We were all young men in the same set and went about and heard things, and when some of these things appeared in the *Owl* everyone marvelled as to where the information came from. . . . The Owls gave dinners to which some of the most beautiful young ladies of the day were asked and at which Lady Wharncliffe among others acted as chaperone. One of these dinners was at Greenwich. An ivy serpent decorated the table, forming a coil opposite each lady's plate, and in the coil was a beautiful box of chocolates from Boissier, with the monogram of the lady on the lid. Another time a Bacchus in the centre of the table held jewels which were handed round, each lady being asked to take what she liked. Once all the Owls went to Paris and spent the day in woods near the city. We sang songs and crowned ourselves with ivy garlands, and finally dined up a huge old tree into whose branches we were hauled up by ropes, ladies and all, singing ballads the while. . . . The only expense of the paper was the printing, and as the circulation rose to six thousand and the price was sixpence a copy, the proceeds were spent upon our dinners and jaunts. The printer was a man who was in a small way of business.<sup>1</sup> The success of the *Owl* literally turned his head and he became mad. One feature of the *Owl* was to announce engagements which we knew on good authority were likely to

<sup>1</sup> Onwhyn, of Catharine Street, Strand.

take place, but which had not been formally announced.<sup>1</sup> So popular was the proceeding among the young ladies of the day that they frequently would not say yes to a suitor until they had seen their name coupled with his in the *Owl*. After dinner every Monday the Owls met to discuss their contributions and edit the paper, which appeared early on Tuesday."

But this does not account for all the Owls. Sir Henry Wolff in his *Random Recollections* says the principal contributors besides those already named were Sir Henry Bulwer, Cameron of Lochiel, Henry Cowper, Charles Clifford, Campion, Knatchbull Hugessen (Lord Brabourne), Sir George Trevelyan, Sir Andrew Clarke, and Colonel Reilly.<sup>2</sup> He himself helped to perpetuate the memory of the paper by using the name Owls Road in the development of some property of his own at Bournemouth. In one number appears an account of a conference of Owls at which the following are supposed to assist: Mrs Norton, Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford, Lord Houghton, Bernal Osborne, Laurence Oliphant, Seymour Fitzgerald, W. Vernon Harcourt, Abraham Hayward, Pakenham Alderson, and Alfred Seymour. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff says that there were lady Owls, and Mrs Norton may well have been one. The Bishop can hardly have been a regular associate, but it is not at all unlikely that he entered into the spirit of the fun. His name appears frequently. Seymour Fitzgerald was deeply interested in foreign politics. Alderson was very much in society, and Alfred Seymour was a Member of Parliament, fond of literature and the world of fashion. The others are

<sup>1</sup> Only one contradiction of an announced engagement occurred.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. 38.

sufficiently well known, and all were the kind of men to be Owls. On the other hand a later conference represents a gathering of those who were certainly not Owls, and who were habitually satirised in the paper. Indeed, some of those in the foregoing list are usually spoken of in such a way that it is not easy to say whether the Owls were laughing at them or with them. One paragraph speaks of fifty Owls being required to keep the publication alive.

At all events we can be sure of the Owls of the inner circle. On 10th February 1865 an agreement was drawn up and signed by Borthwick, Wortley, Ashley, and Cameron of Lochiel. Borthwick was to be considered proprietor, and he was to pay over the following proportions of the net profits: to Wortley, twenty-five per cent.; Ashley, fifteen per cent.; Lochiel, ten per cent. In case of loss, they were to reimburse Borthwick in the like proportions. Furthermore, when Borthwick married he received this letter from Lord Wharncliffe, accompanying a silver salver as the gift of the Owls: ". . . . The names have not been engraved, nor has any inscription yet been decided on, as time is short and there are two Owls abroad; but the list includes Jem,<sup>1</sup> Wolff, Hugessen,<sup>2</sup> Childers,<sup>3</sup> Davenport,<sup>4</sup> Ashley, Lochiel, Champion,<sup>5</sup> Corry,<sup>6</sup> Calcraft,<sup>7</sup> Keane, Cochrane,<sup>8</sup> Clarke,<sup>9</sup> and Vivian. We assume Reilly and Forbes will take up their share in the investment. . . ."

Other occasional contributors were Mr Percy Mitford and Mr Thomas Gibson Bowles, who is presumably the sole survivor, and who was wise enough to turn his

<sup>1</sup> Wortley.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Brabourne.

<sup>3</sup> Right Hon. H. C. E.

<sup>4</sup> Mr Davenport Bromley, M.P.

<sup>5</sup> Secretary and son-in-law of Mr Speaker Brand.

<sup>6</sup> Lord Rowton.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Henry.

<sup>8</sup> Lord Lamington.

<sup>9</sup> Sir Andrew.

experience to account and embark in 1868 on his own prosperous adventure with *Vanity Fair*.

In connection with the ladies' nights Lord Wharncliffe wrote to Borthwick in 1891: ". . . I have been reading Oliphant's *Life*, and have tried to recollect who the six ladies were who dined at that memorable dinner at the Trafalgar. Five of them were Lady Wharncliffe, Miss Wortley (Lady Montagu of Beaulieu), Lady Constance Primrose (Lady Leconfield), Lady Mary Stanhope (the late Lady Beauchamp), Lady Victoria Ashley (Lady Templemore). Who was the sixth?"

Borthwick's answer is not forthcoming, but I am indebted to Lady Leconfield for the following information: "To the best of my recollection only five ladies were present" (those named above). "There is very little that one can put down in writing about the dinner party beyond the recollection that it was very, very pleasant, and the delightful fact that at dessert we were each presented with a gift. I mean each of us five ladies. The gifts were arranged in a sort of stand in the centre of the table, and we drew lots for choice. I think Lady Templemore drew No. 1. I was fortunate enough to be No. 2, and I still have the turquoise and crystal locket with chain that I received in consequence."

The reception that awaited the *Owl* was so flattering and so surprising to the colleagues that they were inclined to rest content with their achievements and not run the risk of a reaction; but Borthwick had an inspiration. He knew the Emperor of the French, and was familiar with his style of speaking and writing. He also knew that during some recent overtures on the question of reduction of armaments the Emperor had used the words, "Je ne désire pas m'exposer de nouveau



à de telles méprises.” In the next number of the *Owl*, therefore, a letter was printed, purporting to come from Borthwick’s old friend M. Mocquard, the Emperor’s secretary; in it were these sentences: “L’Empereur a donné à Lord Clarendon lors de sa visite à Paris des explications très nettes sur ce point, mais il craint que ce diplomate distingué ne soit trop fin pour apprécier la vérité à sa juste valeur. . . . L’Empereur ne désire pas s’exposer de nouveau à de telles méprises . . . et elle ne peut que se persuader que la politique inexplicable de ‘meddle-muddle’<sup>1</sup> se montre dans ses résultats le contraire absolu de son axiome, et que dans ce cas ‘la paix c’est la guerre.’ ”

The success of this experiment was startling. The *Moniteur* contained an official announcement that the letter was an impudent fabrication, and the fame of the Owls was permanently established. To their great delight they were able to publish in the following number a genuine letter from M. Mocquard in which he says that he has since learnt that the *Owl* is a “journal d’un caractère facétieux,” but that he declares to be no excuse; and he protests indignantly, and not without reason, against the “usage d’une fausse signature pour donner un air de vraisemblance à une mystification effrontée.” After this it was inevitable that the publication must continue.

In its original form the paper consisted of four pages, enlarged before long to eight, of which two were to be devoted to advertisements: from these, amongst other things, we learn that Greek wine had a market in London at the time. On the cover was a group of owls holding council in an ivy bush. The first issue (27th April 1864)

<sup>1</sup> This had been Lord Derby’s description of Lord John Russell’s foreign policy in the previous year.

was numbered 1001; the title was *A Wednesday Journal of Politics and Society*, and its motto was taken from Horace's "De Arte Poetica"—"Tu nihil invitâ dices faciesve Minervâ," which Conington translates:

"You will not fly in Queen Minerva's face  
In action or in word."

Throughout its career the paper kept this form and appeared regularly during the Parliamentary season, except when the Owls announced that they were going to Ascot, or that they would be away at Whitsuntide, or that they were leaving London for good, in which case the public had to go without their paper.

Each year the Academy was noticed, but there were neither reviews of books nor criticisms of plays, and there were never any illustrations. This in itself limited the facilities for humour. There was much poetry; one number is all verse. Mr Dasent in his *Life of Delane* calls the *Owl* a journalistic plaything.<sup>1</sup> It was something more than that. The political satire is full of insight and significance. Sometimes the tone is serious and severe. Borthwick was well acquainted with foreign statesmen, especially those of France; and his articles are worth reading now for the truth that lies behind the veil of burlesque. So much so, indeed, that, as Mr Dasent says, Delane often quoted them in the *Times* under the heading of "Owlsight," though "whether the originators regarded this as a compliment to the clearness of their political vision or the reverse we cannot say."<sup>2</sup>

Lord Glenesk knew the value of catching attention by accuracy in trifles. In his narrative he tells of one effective touch of this kind: during the Congress of

<sup>1</sup> *Life of J. T. Delane*, ii. 126.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Paris, he says, there was a stormy scene. In the *Owl* he caricatured this, making Lord Clarendon leave the table and go to the window, where he stood watching an organ-grinder, until he was requested to come back. This had actually happened.

It was, as a matter of fact, at a Cabinet Council, and the scene is described thus (4th May 1864): "Lord Palmerston opened the proceedings by calling attention to the report which had appeared in the columns of the *Owl* of the Conference" (then sitting in London upon the affairs of Schleswig-Holstein), "and hinted that either Lord Russell or Lord Clarendon must have contributed [it]. . . . Lord Russell admitted that he had formerly been on the staff of the *Owl*, but he had considered it his duty when he accepted office under Lord Palmerston to renounce his connection with it. At this point Lord Clarendon was attracted to the window by the performances of an acting monkey in the street, and on resuming his seat looked flushed and agitated."

Whence these secrets were extracted one cannot say, but it must be remembered that the staff included Ashley and Corry, who were in the closest confidence, the one of Palmerston until his death in 1865, the other of Disraeli after 1866. It has been said by a sarcastic commentator that these gentlemen were "kept to divulge the information which it was their business to keep to themselves"; and this one may accept, with the assured reservation that neither of them was ever guilty of a breach of trust.

Of the general scheme and character of the paper one cannot give a better description than these lines which are known to have been written by Sir George Trevelyan<sup>1</sup>:—

<sup>1</sup> *Sir H. D. Wolff*, ii. 40.

Then hither and listen whoever  
Would learn in our pages the miracle  
Of passing for witty and clever  
Without being voted satirical !

He'd better be apt with his pen  
Than well dressed, well booted and gloved,  
Who likes to be liked by the men,  
By the women who loves to be loved.  
And fashion full often has paid  
The good word in return for a gay word,  
For a song in the manner of Praed,  
Or an anecdote worthy of Hayward.

It may be said at once that much of the poetry is excellent; some imitations of Greek pieces indeed are almost out of place in so light a publication. Lord Brabourne was one of the most industrious poets, and he was very likely responsible for these. Mr Davenport Bromley also wrote much of the verse, but it is impossible to identify the author of the following parodies:

(Of a meeting in Trafalgar Square.)

We wandered about in the dim twilight,  
The sleet with our mackintosh turning,  
And shivered awaiting the demagogue Bright,  
The paraffin dimly burning.

Disraeli might speak of their meetings with scorn  
And chaff Bright and those who obeyed him,  
But little he'd reck if they'd let him stay on  
In office where luck had conveyed him.

So thought we—but now our task was done,  
The last little cad was retiring,  
Some laughed, and some swore at Reform, and one  
A hansom was sullenly hiring.

*(A Psalm of Reform.)*

Soon no county and no borough  
 Will befriend us on our way,  
 And from Downing Street to-morrow  
 Sees us further than to day.

Art won't do when out of office ;  
 And our men, though stout and brave,  
 Whether veteran or novice,  
 Still keep marching to the Cave.

*(Elegy.)*

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pride,  
 Avail not when no fortune is possest ;  
 Nor deck with rich guipure the blushing bride  
 Nor fix the orange blossom in her breast.

Here rested once upon this cushioned seat  
 A maid to billets and to vows unknown ;  
 Chill penury repelled the suitor's heat,  
 And celibacy marked her for her own.

*(St Stephen's Hall.)*

Oh, my Dizzy, juggler-hearted—oh, my Dizzy, true no more,  
 Oh, the former Tory speeches ; oh, the county members' roar !

They will hold thee when thy talent shall have passed this  
 precious Bill ;  
 Something cheaper than John Bright—a little worse than  
 Stuart Mill.

What is this? They hardly cheer thee—say not they are  
 mazed with wine.

Lead them on, it is thy duty ; flatter them, but don't resign.

Oh, I see thee still in office (no Conservative indeed !)  
 With a hoard of clever sayings preaching down a Party's creed.  
 "They were dangerous guides the pledges—from the same in  
 sessions past,  
 Truly he himself had suffered" ; can such arrant humbug last ?

The Owls had to cater for every taste. They agitated M. Mocquard in the Tuileries ; they excited the youngest débutante in Mayfair ; and herein lie at once the mystery and the credit of their triumph.

One permanent source of popularity lay in the acrostics, of which Stuart Wortley was the ingenious editor, or, according to Sir H. D. Wolff, Lord Wharncliffe. It cannot be said that the wit was always of the most brilliant description. Some of the essays on society are prosy ; some of the jokes are laboured ; there are some poor puns. Yet long after the novelty had worn off, the enjoyment of society appears to have remained undiminished. For one thing, the paper had not as yet any rivals. Moreover, it always contained something surprising, or clever, or interesting, and plenty of personal allusions. There are some good sayings repeated, which may or may not be familiar. Drouyn de Lhuys is credited with "un savant est un homme qui sait ce que tout le monde ignore et qui ignore ce que tout le monde sait."

To Mr Gladstone is attributed the definition of a deputation as a noun of multitude signifying many but not signifying much. Of course he never said anything of the kind. The jest was Stuart Wortley's.

Of Fuad Pasha : on having an audience with a Queen regnant, who hoped that the Sultan would not be annoyed at her having changed the diamonds from a brooch, which he had given to her, into earrings : "Au contraire, Madame, le Sultan sera enchanté d'apprendre que votre Majesté veuille bien prêter l'oreille à ce qui vient de Constantinople."

Again, to an agent of the financial firm of Devaux & Co., who declared he worked like an ox : "Puisque vous représentez la maison Devaux."

And of a Russian who declared that the Bosphorus was so beautiful that everyone should wish to settle there: "C'est sans doute sourtout à son gouvernement qu'il adresse ce conseil là."

As specimens of the society verses the following stanzas show that some person or persons on the staff had a happy knack of tune and tone:—

*Cousin Kate.*

She has lovers by dozens and all of them "swells,"  
But she's none of your "girl of the period" belles ;  
And accepting their homage will quietly wait  
Till she finds the right person for sweet Cousin Kate.

It isn't her dress, and it isn't her face,  
Nor her wit, nor her figure, that gives her such grace ;  
But 'tis something of all in that maiden sedate  
That makes men so fond of my sweet Cousin Kate.

*Eheu Fugaces !*

What is it, oh ! what is it  
That makes the market slow ?  
Do men delay to visit  
Or ladies answer No ?  
In tender contest vying,  
Should not all hearts be sighing  
For ties there's no untying,  
But, ah, it is not so.

You can't be sure of marriage,  
And Dukes are getting rare,  
E'en folks who keep a carriage  
Must have some cash to spare.  
Then, ladies, do not tarry,  
But, if you want to marry,  
Take Tom, or Dick, or Harry,  
And live in Brompton Square.



*Owls at Richmond.*

For as evening mists slowly ascending  
Dim the stars twinkling out in the blue,  
Our voices shall, cheerily rending,  
Raise a song and a life that is new.

If a sage Owl shrieks out a to-wit,  
Let us mock him with merry to-woo,  
There are soft doves about us that flit,  
Who may fondly re-echo a "coo."

In a publication of this kind good nonsense is, of course, an essential element, and Borthwick was, no doubt, personally responsible for some excellent fooling. In the earliest numbers the reports of the Schleswig-Holstein Conference may safely be ascribed to him. It is not easy to convey the sustained spirit of burlesque, but these fragments will give an impression of the method employed :

". . . These preliminaries having been arranged, the members of the Conference exchanged full powers and other acts of civility ; and Earl Russell took advantage of their being thus engaged to vote himself unanimously into the Chair.

" After reproving the Hon. William Stuart in an undertone for winking at this, the noble Earl proceeded to state frankly that as they had met to secure the blessings of peace to the north of Europe, he would use the strongest and most abusive language against the first member of the Conference who should raise a difficulty or contradict him. . . . Lord Clarendon had been associated with him because he could speak French . . . . he did not believe anybody except himself thought him (Lord Russell) in any way

qualified for the position he then held. . . . At this moment the proceedings were interrupted by Lord Clarendon, who requested to be allowed to shake hands all round. . . .

"Privy Councillor Balan remarked that M. Bismarck was not the sort of man to stand any nonsense and that you never knew what he was up to. Lord Russell requested Mr Stuart to make a note of that. . . . Baron de Bille announced his intention of cordially co-operating with his colleague . . . when he received a violent kick on the shin from M. Qaade.

"At this moment Lord Clarendon again requested permission to shake hands all round."

In 1865 the Davenport brothers were entertaining London with their séances: consequently of a Cabinet Council we read:—

"Mr Gladstone said he knew how to wriggle out of anything. As for hoping to bind him in such a way that he could not get free, the idea was absurd.

"Lord Palmerston said the lights must be extinguished; but as they were accustomed to work in the dark, that did not matter: they must all agree to sit still and join hands.

"The Lord Chancellor begged there might be fair play, and that they would promise not to tickle him, for he had lately been in a ticklish situation and was very sensitive." This was a shrewd touch: poor Lord Westbury had need to be uneasy still.

One day the House of Commons decides to have a French debate which opens thus:—

"L'ordre des jour appelle la motion de M. Mill sur l'affranchissement des femmes.

"M. le Président Denison—La parole est à M. Mill.

"M. Mill—Messieurs, quand je vois la lune et quand je vois le soleil. ('Touchez à terre.') J'y arrive! Je citerai les femmes illustres et la première, Eve. ('Arrivez à nos jours.') Soit! . . .

"M. le Président—Rentrez dans la question, M. Mill.

"M. Mill—Je n'y suis pas entré, et je ne peux par en être sorti. ('C'est logique.') Est-ce sous la Reine Anne, dite sanguinaire? (M. Newdegate—'Parlez-nous de Smithfield')"—and so on, good capital being made out of each member's hobby or peculiarity.

In 1865 Lord Sefton was sent to convey the insignia of the Garter to the King of Portugal, and Lord Cowper on a similar mission to the King of Denmark. Both Lords came in for disrespectful notice. In the Admiralty Orders to Admiral Dacres, with whom Lord Sefton was to sail, these instructions were included:

"My Lords are informed, unofficially, that great powers of conversation exist amongst the members of the Embassy. You will therefore, for your own sake, give every opportunity to the Ambassador for speaking ships, as thereby great relief will be afforded to yourself and your officers. . . .

"If it should be necessary to repair the standing rigging of the ship, owing to any stays carrying away during heavy weather, you are recommended to use for that purpose yarn spun by the Earl of Sefton, as by experience these have been found to be unusually long, free from any point, and have never been known to break off unexpectedly or before it was desired."

Lord Cowper's diplomatic qualifications are put under suspicion by Lord Russell's instructions: "On being presented to the King of Denmark, after the usual compliments, you will proceed with some energy to discuss

the subject of the weather, and you cannot be too careful to avoid all political topics."

At this distance it is by no means easy to distinguish between truth and fiction, and to know always when the Owls are dealing with fact and when they are merely joking; and we learn from the issue of 6th July 1864 that contemporary readers were not much less puzzled. Still less can one tell the difference between a definite announcement and an *Owl* prognostication.

Well informed as they were, the Owls had on many occasions to insert contradictions and confess mistakes. They were wrong in assuring their readers that there would be no war arising out of the Danish troubles in 1864, and again when Prussia and Austria were at issue in 1866. They declared that our present King would be named and known as Prince Christian; also that Prince Christian was about to be created Duke of Kendal. Many gentlemen were named for peerages who never received them, and the movements of the Court were erringly anticipated.

To set against this it must be admitted that they were more often right than wrong, although they boldly ventured into all the realms of prophecy. Moreover, they succeeded in 1865 in the most difficult of all predictions by stating in March that Parliament would be dissolved in July; with a subsequent and unfortunate addition that it would be at the end of the month, whereas the event occurred on the 10th.

Here are some examples of graver matter. In May 1864 appeared "An Easy Lesson on Foreign Politics," which, in the form of a letter to a child, explains the complicated Danish question and British responsibilities. "This is a long lesson," is its conclusion, "but if people

are too stupid to understand it now, let them put it away in a drawer and at the end of the war let them pull it out and read it again. They will understand it then when it is too late."

In 1865 the prospects of England are compared with the fates of Carthage, Venice, Holland, and Spain. The Owls do not altogether "despair of our country," but they protest against "the popular preachers of cant who paint with roseate hue," which is not the way to "escape from the responsibilities which may speedily come thick upon us." The writer is quite as much in earnest and convinced of his duty to warn and inspire as any publicist in our serious journals.

War with America is gravely contemplated a little later: "We go dreaming on," says the *Owl*, "disbelieving in the evil day, ignoring the lessons of the present, refusing to calculate the certainties of the future." It is always instructive to observe that our lucubrations of to-day are no more than an echo from each preceding generation; there is a very modern ring about all these contributions. On 10th May 1865 Lord Russell writes a despatch to our Minister at Frankfort on the subject of the German Navy. This had indeed become a national aspiration. The Danish crisis had revealed the disadvantage of having no formidable force at sea.<sup>1</sup> Lord Russell is made to underrate the ultimate possibilities of the new movement. "I do not of course pretend to consider Kiel as ever likely to be available (as a fort)," he writes, and suggests offering the Serpentine as a safe and pleasant refuge for a fleet which is required nowhere and is never likely to be efficient. In 1867 there is an alarming story of mismanagement

<sup>1</sup> *E.g., The German Empire of To-day*, by Veritas, 114.

and failure in the supply of rifles and ammunition for the army. At the same time Woman's Suffrage was much to the front, urged forward by John Stuart Mill, and "Impatience" writes to the *Owl* to broach the question of how women should dress when they shall have secured seats in Parliament.

On 22nd May 1867 the new Reformed Parliament meets: the chaplain is driven out of the House with jeers and insults; the upper house and all titles are gone; and Dictator Beales congratulates the country on the extinction of everything in the shape of law. Henry Somerset, ex-Duke of Beaufort, is charged before Mr Priggins, R.C. (returned convict), with refusing to work in the National Gallery—now a casual ward for the ex-nobility. Next year it is John Bright who under his new title of the Master of Gladstone is dragging the Liberal party into Republicanism.

In 1868 society appears to have paid some attention to bicycling, though not with such fervour as existed for a short time thirty years later. And we are not spared the familiar diatribes against the decay of manners both in speech and conduct. "To-day our 'swell' dresses like a stableman," we are told (12th May 1869), "affects the lowest slang of Whitechapel and the Minorities—ay, and not only endeavours to add force to his remarks by the frequent interpolation of blasphemy and oaths, but by example leads his wife, his sister, his daughter even, to give notice of their painful relationship to him, their teacher, by the vapidty of their conversation and manners. Again, he has the bad taste to prefer vicious to virtuous society. . . ." Elsewhere:—" 'Beastly' is by no means an uncommon expression, and it is far from unusual to hear that it is a 'beastly shame' that so-and-



so should talk such 'bosh' or 'rot.' Should the intentions of two young people with regard to matrimony be the topic of conversation, the correct remark to make would be, 'Is this bis?' (*i.e.* business), or is she only a 'spangle'? . . ."

A curious anticipation of invention and social progress appears on 10th April 1867, when the Duke of Brighton telegraphs under the date of 1st April 1900 to his daughter at Cannes, whence she is to return in one day by electric train: she must be careful of the Calais Atmospheric, because the sensation is unpleasant, although the Channel passage only lasts a few seconds. As she is now fifteen she must be prepared to vote at the General Election. Cornwall being one of the states of the republic, it is expected that the Duke will be a candidate. But it is not suggested that the community is tranquil: a horse will be at her service from which she may safely fire a revolver in case she should stray beyond the rounds of the police. But there is no mention of flying machines.

Amongst the odd or novel pieces of information these are worth noting. In 1866 the weather forecasts issued by the meteorological department of the Board of Trade were so habitually wrong that it was decided to abandon them. It was generally believed at this time that Lord John Manners was to be Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. And a disputed question is apparently settled by an incidental allusion to the Sion House lion with his tail pointing *towards* the city.

Before all things the Owls were censors, and they said what they thought without scruple. In June 1866 a paragraph commented on the extreme inconvenience imposed upon Ministers and the interruption of public business by the determination of the Queen to stay at Balmoral when



her presence was required in London ; and later on they admitted this dubious pleasantry :—"Ce qui égaye Paris —Bal-immoral. Ce qui attriste Londres—Bal-moral."

As might be expected, Palmerston was their favourite, and though he figures in many comic situations he is never ridiculous. After his death there is an indignant refutation of the suggestion that he was at heart a Conservative : "Lord Palmerston was a statesman whose patriotism was enlightened and who never permitted party nor personal prejudices to interfere with his calm judgment."

For some unexplained reason they stoutly defended Lord Westbury when charges of nepotism led to his resignation of the Great Seal ; and they even went so far as to compromise their reputation for sagacity by assuring their readers that he would not have to resign.

Some members of Parliament such as Milner Gibson, Whalley, and Darby Griffith they belaboured with incessant raillery ; and it probably amuses Lord Weimys now to recall the disrespectful manner in which they dealt with his opposition to Reform ; as thus :—

*Hootle Tum Tay.*

Now the Party which Lowe and I made  
Had not paid, it was said,  
And Reform in its progress we'd stayed,  
Interposing all sorts of delay ;  
So they mobbed me, my volunteers brave,  
And most ill did behave,  
For they shouted, "Go home to the Cave !"  
Hootle tum tootle tum tay.  
They called me "Flash Frank the deceiver,"  
And again I was made to receive a  
Hootle tum tootle tum tay.

It has been said that Montagu Corry was an Owl, and he may be recognised in some "Hints to Private Secretaries by Mr Disraeli's own M.C.," not by the initials alone, but also by that bright and merry spirit which is affectionately remembered by the friends of Lord Rowton. In spite of this connection, however, Disraeli was not spared. One instance will serve to show at once the Owls' assertion of his egotism and insincerity, and their felicity in mimicry of his style. The new Prime Minister proposes his own health thus:—" . . . And stranger still, this child of the Orient has employed the cunning of Asia, clothed in the phraseology of Europe, to drag the aristocracy of England through sophisms and inconsistencies which might have appalled the casuists of St Omer. . . . Pursued by the machinations of an insidious foe, and haunted by the immediate prospect of a General Election, he invoked the ghost of stale aphorisms from the dust of years, and inscribed the cry of Church and State upon the banners of a resuscitated faction."

Lord Russell was always held up to contumely. At one Cabinet Council Lord Palmerston observes that he never knew the extent of his own personal popularity until he found it strong enough to drag the Foreign Minister out of the mess he had got into. His ignorance of French is displayed. After an interview with the French Ambassador he wants to know what is the meaning of a phrase which he caught about a status derived à bantico.

"Ab antiquo," explain the Owls.

"But why did he pronounce it in that way?" asked Lord Russell.

In fact, his incapacity and faults are exposed with

a relentlessness second only to that employed against another Foreign Secretary, Lord Malmesbury, and more appropriate to Parliamentary warfare. When he resigned the leadership of the Liberal party the Owls paid him some tribute of respect, but the tone is a little too florid to be altogether sincere.

Lord Cowley fares even worse. Writing to M. Drouyn de Lhuys he recounts the number of occasions on which he has assisted France by his indiscreet utterances and by habitually transmitting false impressions and misleading intelligence to his own Government.

Lord Henry Lennox, as Secretary to the Admiralty, is a constant source of merriment with his officiousness and determination to be predominant in his department. The Owls are reluctant to treat him seriously; this is how they answer a question for him in the House of Commons: "With respect to the question which has been asked by the hon. person the Member for Portsmouth, I may state that the subject of increased pensions to midshipmen's widows has received the most careful consideration of myself and my colleagues (cries of Dear, dear). . . . The final decision at which we have arrived on this question is, that we scarcely feel justified in bringing in any measure during the present session (loud tears)."

In the case of Bismarck the Owls entertained a deep aversion and distrust. Very early in their career they published a secret correspondence between him and Count Bernstorff, his representative at the Schleswig-Holstein Conference. "You should defy the Government of Her Majesty by the arrogance of your tone and finally humiliate them by trying to bring about the failure of the Conference." "The English are incapable," so runs

the reply, "of appreciating that political audacity, official treachery, and diplomatic arrogance, which your Excellency's acts and despatches so happily combine." Presently he is found instructing his Minister in Paris to accede to any demands which the French Government may make, provided they will aid and abet him in his policy of injuring Great Britain. His treatment of Austria in anticipation of the war of 1866 is criticised as no less selfish and unscrupulous.

But in spite of this searching severity the tone and temper are never coarse or violent, and the *Owl* may claim the title of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in *Pendennis* as "a paper written by gentlemen for gentlemen." There is an occasional lapse, as when John Bright is represented as saying in an address, "As I never pretended to be a gentleman I daresay my friends will excuse any accidental deviations into good taste"—a cut which can only damage the assailant. Again, of Mr Whalley, a poetical visitor to the House of Commons reports—

He didn't sing, but seem to burn  
With rage against the Pope;  
I thought his mind he'd better turn  
To razors and to soap.

But if in the course of six years these instances stand out in striking contrast to all the rest, it may fairly be said that whether the wit attained to a high standard or not, the manners of the paper were something more than respectable.

On 4th August 1869 Lord Wharncliffe wrote to Borthwick from Bergen: "Now as to the bird. Tell me how the pestilential periodical has been going on." Borthwick might have replied at once that the last number of the season had appeared on 28th July: he

did not know that it was to be the final issue. It is clear that the staff showed no signs of languishing, and the paper need not have collapsed for want of support. But Borthwick was undoubtedly the guiding and moving spirit, as he had been the organiser and manager from the first. Next year he was engaged to be married, and he said at once that he was no longer prepared to attend *Owl* dinners every Monday, nor to devote so much of his time to supervision. It was clear to the others that the game was played out, and they wisely decided not to try to prolong it.

The accounts had been duly made up each year. Items were charged under the head of dinners, opera boxes, gifts, and charities.<sup>1</sup> The surplus was divided amongst the original partners according to their agreement, and it would seem that at the end a present of money was made to some, at all events, of the contributors. There had evidently been a proposal once to pay these regularly, for Borthwick writes in an undated letter: "I would not join an *Owl* in which you were to pay outside men: you would soon find only those fellows got paid, and you would soon have a whip and find yourselves minus money. If you like to do it let me be a paid contributor. That's the right side of the Bush."

So ended an adventure, entered upon in jest, pursued not without serious intent, and successful enough to leave behind it lasting memories; unlike all other journalistic efforts in that it was unconcerned with financial aims, yet the pioneer of a great commercial enterprise and of a new element in our social life.

<sup>1</sup> In acknowledging a contribution to the Newspaper Press Fund, "Mr Charles Dickens . . . is happy to take the opportunity of assuring the Owls of his personal consideration and esteem for the dwellers in the Ivy Bush."

## CHAPTER IX

### LADY GLENESK

ALICE LISTER in many ways supplied the complement necessary to the character and career of such a man as Algernon Borthwick. Her father was Mr Thomas Lister of Armitage Park, Staffordshire, not unknown as an author. Her mother was a Villiers, sister of the Lord Clarendon who played so conspicuous a part in the politics of the middle of the last century. She also had a taste for literature: her *Lives of the Friends and Contemporaries of Lord Chancellor Clarendon* won her so much favour that Miss Berry bequeathed to her the task of publishing extracts from her journals and correspondence. Another work undertaken was the editing of Miss Eden's novel, *A Semi-detached House*.

Mr Lister died in 1842, and his widow presently married Sir George Cornwall Lewis, who, as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary, the author of several learned works, and editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, held a foremost place both in politics and literature. He and Lady Theresa were both dead at the time of her daughter's marriage, but Miss Lister's birth and bringing up had given her all the advantages which belong to family influence, familiarity with public affairs, and the atmosphere of literary surroundings.

No better equipment could be desired for the wife of



one whose road to success must lie through journalism, politics, and society. A stupid or unenterprising wife might have acted as a continual drag; a spirited and ambitious woman could help him at every turn, and it was his good fortune to marry a helpful and sympathetic ally.

Alice Lister's sister, Therèse, had been married eleven years earlier to Sir William Harcourt. She died in 1863, but we shall see that the husband and their son, Lewis, never relaxed the ties of kinship and affection with the Borthwick family.

Lady Glenesk appears to have inherited the instinct for correspondence which has died out in our generation. She liked to write letters and receive them: also to keep them. Those from her mother make a formidable bundle: they contain little of interest to us, but they make it clear that the writer was devotedly attached to her daughter. It is most important to observe that throughout Lady Glenesk's correspondence, from the first letters from her grandmother to the latest received from her children, there is never absent the topic of health. She was subject to constant ailments as a child, and appears to have suffered much. In later years she was continually away from home for the sake of climate or rest. There were occasional attacks of illness, definite and transient; but these were not the worst. It may require very little excuse to tempt one to spend successive winters on the shores of the Mediterranean, where the sky may be blue and the villa garden will assuredly be bright, but there can be no inducement beyond escape from some form of suffering to make a woman of keen energy exchange the comforts and interests of home life for the doubtful





*Lady Glenesk*



accommodation and dreary existence of English spas and refuges for invalids. This was Lady Glenesk's habit; and it is difficult to doubt that she had to contend throughout life with that kind of infirmity which receives the less sympathy the less familiar and definite it is, and seldom meets with due appreciation until it culminates in sudden or untimely death.

In order to fill up this outline of portrait, a few extracts from her correspondence may conveniently be given. Her earliest productions are remarkable rather for quantity than quality. "For Four days I have had no litter from ennybody," she writes to her sister. . . . "You may think I write very short litters but the plane truth is that I have no paper or envelops so I am obliged to write on this little peace of paper."

As a girl she seems to have passed through the embittered phase which is not very rare, and need be attributed to nothing but a disordered system. This postscript to a letter from her sister immediately after marriage evidently has to do with some former expression of opinion: "*That William Harcourt* sends his best love to '*Miss Lister*,' likewise his respectful compliments to the bridesmaids. Also he wishes Alice to know that after all marriage is not quite as bad as it seems and might be supposed. With a little resignation and patience it is really quite endurable." In the following year Lady Theresa writes:—

Your dear Papa [Sir G. C. Lewis] came home from the Cabinet looking well, and I am happy to tell you that, contrary to your usual theory about husbands and wives, I think he was really as glad to have me back again as I was to see his dear face. . . . With such examples in your own family you should not rail at the whole race of men, married and single.

Against these we must immediately set Sir William's letter of 1895 :—

We have just returned from abroad and find you a Peeress ! You know the deep and affectionate interest I feel in you and yours and how sincerely I rejoice that the great merits and distinguished services of your good husband should be worthily recognised. I have always regarded you and him as patterns of conjugal felicity, and you have certainly been helps meet for each other. It is always so pleasant when one's dear friends succeed in life.

That Lady Glenesk did indeed make her husband's interest her own is made evident by the following extracts. In an undated letter she says :—

All this makes me feel strongly that after all your work you have a right to go to Rydeout (I don't know how to spell it) and say, I have again brought up your Paper by my exertions ; I want to come into Parliament ; you cannot suppose I am going to waste the best years of my life on what pays me little and gives me no other advantages. . . . If Rydeout will do nothing more, with your brains and power there are plenty of directorships that would pay you better than the miserable 3rd you get from the *M.P.* . . . but I will not have my old darling slave as he has done for nothing. . . . I am very willing to part with you (for a short time) if it is for your own good and advantage, but I will not part with you for an hour—for nothing.

This evidently refers to Borthwick's visit to Paris on *Morning Post* business in 1870.

That she was genuinely proud of her husband's struggles and successes is shown in these two letters. Neither is dated, but one refers to some newspaper notice apparently in early days ; the latter was written on a happy occasion long afterwards, when all the rewards of his labours had been gathered in.

*Mrs Borthwick to her Husband.*

I send you something I have written on you. You can take away or add on. I have spoken purposely of your father's elections, as it is good that all he did for the Conservative cause should not be forgotten as it has been. I have touched delicately on your having been left with the care of the family, so that if you like to tell your story, of which I am so proud and which is so much to your credit, you can do so without saying your father was ruined, but it can be understood that he spent all his substance on elections.

*Lady Glenesk to the Same.*

. . . . I too was *proud*, and if you had heard what I said to one or two intimate friends. . . . I think it is the *finest* thing in the world for a man to have been thrown on the world without a penny, and by his own *unaided* efforts and brains to have been able . . . . to behave as you have done. . . . I know no man's career more high-minded and more honourable.

And yet her tone was never that of uncritical adulation. Writing on "Friday," she says :

He talked a good deal of you with great affection and admiration ; is anxious you should come forward more. He said you rather repel and frighten people by your manner. Sometimes, he says, some men who like and respect you, feel a sort of *gêne* with you and complain of it. I repeat it, because I think it is useful to know what people say of us. . . . You must not be offended. . . . People have been saying some ill-natured things of me. I never intended to be rude, but I must take more trouble to be civil. Manner goes further with many people than all the kindness one has done them in a small way.

Happily the telling of home truths did not diminish the appreciation of so much sympathy. "Nothing is of any use," writes the husband in one letter, "unless you are at home. Had you been here I should have been eloquent . . . . but without you I have neither inspiration nor pluck."

Lady Glenesk was not in the habit of suppressing such criticism as she felt inclined to utter. When *Endymion* was published in 1881 she was moved to speak of it with a detachment of mind not to be looked for in one who was shortly to be the first enrolled lady of the Primrose League. She disliked the spirit and tone of the book; especially the moral "by which the hero ascends to fame, not by his own talents and efforts, but by his sister's worldly marriage, the friendship of half a dozen countesses, and taking money from the Rothschilds. . . . It is more than sad to think this is all the Conservative party have to look to to fight the great battle of the classes. . . . When we are 1d. Post and have a following, we may be able to show ourselves *Conservatives*. . . ." She appears to have regarded the rule of a complacent aristocracy as obsolete, and her use of the word Conservative seems to foreshadow the coming of the Tory democrat.

This diatribe cannot fail to shock a strict disciple of Disraeli, and it is only fair to point out in passing that most of his heroes owed their success in large measure to their wives, even as Disraeli himself owed much to the "perfect wife" of whom he speaks in the dedication of *Sybil*. But the incident is worth mentioning for another reason. In one letter, speaking of her children, Lady Borthwick writes, "Everyone says they are Myra and Endymion." In an unsigned and undated request from a friend for some photographs, the writer includes "anything good of the children when they looked like Myra and Endymion." The father's comment on this idea is amusing in its bluntness. He declares it to be "rot. Liliás never came in to dessert with her hair braided with pearls, nor did Oliver, on



being asked when he was going to school, reply, 'I am going to Eton, then to Christchurch, and then into Parliament.'" If the author had possessed the power of divination, he might indeed have acknowledged the portraiture to the extent of endowing the brother and sister with a sympathy and mutual affection exceptionally vivid and profound.

Throughout the letters run glimpses of interesting people and scraps of opinion or information. In 1893 Lady Borthwick wrote from the Villa Boutourlin, Florence, of a visit paid unexpectedly by Queen Victoria: "The Queen was too charming and kind: she came to the window and said, 'Lady Borthwick, may I pay you a visit?' She came in and inspected everything, and sat with me  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour." Then follows a curious account of the conversation: "Most extraordinary the Queen talking politics to me quite freely."

On another occasion, whilst living in the cosmopolitan society of Nice, Lady Borthwick related, with some pride, that she had been employed in the delicate mission of arranging a friendly meeting between two statesmen of different nationalities between whom relations had been strained since the Congress of Berlin.

Sir William Harcourt's letters afford a running commentary on current politics and events of a later period.

*Sir W. Harcourt to Lady Glenesk.*

*Feb. 22, 1896.*

The opening of the Session has been pretty lively, and as we are in a row with all the world there has been plenty to talk about. I had a long interview with the lawless Rhodes, who is a friend of mine, and we are now expecting the arrival of the arch-filibuster Jameson, who will, I suppose, be the British hero.

March 29, 1896.

We have just come to an end of the first chapter of the session—not a very glorious one for the grand Government with its great majority. They have not shown good management and have had bad luck. The country is not pleased to find itself in so many rows in all parts of the world. I wish with all my heart that Africa was at the bottom of the sea. The chosen race were quite right to quit it and leave Pharaoh to his fate and all his plagues. This uprising in Matabele Land is, I fear, a very serious business, and is the direct result of Jameson's conduct, as the natives no doubt have learned his disaster and fancied that he has left the country without protection.

March 31, 1896.

To-day the H. of C. breaks up. I have just been listening to the new Education Bill—as usual with the Tories a most *revolutionary* measure. We shall have to fight it to the death. Do come and help us! In spite of your bad principles I love you always.

In 1897 Lady Glenesk published an article in the *Nineteenth Century* on the "Duration of Life."<sup>1</sup> Sir William writes of it:—

It is very interesting and well written. There is, however, one branch of this subject which you have not noticed, but which has always struck me much. It is unquestionable that the progress of sanitary science, and especially surgical practice, has increased the *general average* of life and no doubt prolonged the existence of individuals; but what is very remarkable is that the improvement in the *expectation of life* on the whole is confined to the *earlier periods of life*, and that after a certain age it is worse than it was 40 years ago. . . . It is a very singular circumstance that in spite of all the progress in sanitary and hygienic reform, the average expectation of life of males after 20 and women after 45 is worse than it was

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<sup>1</sup> Her stepfather, Sir G. C. Lewis, had always maintained that no human being could live for a hundred years. Sir William was himself sceptical; he believed that alleged cases were only found amongst the poorer classes, whose baptismal registers could not be traced.

in the dark ages half a century ago. This is attributed to the fact that now more weakling children are reared, who before would have died, and therefore there are more unsound constitutions in the advanced periods of life, so that the general mortality at these ages is increased. I hope your own expectation of life is on the increase.

Another regular correspondent was the Right Hon. C. P. Villiers, her uncle, who died in 1898 at the age of 96. In 1880 he wrote her a sharp letter after the General Election :—

DEAR ALICE,—If Harcourt could be served by somebody else being victimised than me I should be very glad. The lying extract from a Religious Paper circulated in the *Morning Post* this morning, relating to my making way immediately for him (Harcourt) who has lost his seat at Oxford, has already cost me 4 telegrams in giving it unqualified contradiction, and those who know that you are my niece may possibly think that I was a party to its insertion! So that I suppose it will not be easy (for some days at least) to abate the disturbance at my expense it will cause in the large district I represent.<sup>1</sup>—  
Yours affectly., C. P. V.

By 1894 his detachment from his old Liberal friends had become complete :—

"Where we are all going now your husband may be able to tell you, but it strikes me that is very distinctly downwards under our present rulers."

In one of his last letters, however, he allows himself a cheerful reflection upon his share in the repeal of the corn laws :—

"The country is very prosperous and not less because *bread is cheap*. . . . I never leave Cadogan Place, though not from choice."

Yet the following letter must have been written after he was ninety-three, as the address proves :—

<sup>1</sup> Wolverhampton South.

*Thursday.*

MY DEAR NIECE GLENESK,—I am extremely reconnaissant for the most magnificent bouquet I ever received. . . . I believe the Bachelors is the *healthiest* spot in London (that is Hamilton Place) and the materials of the dinner are superior to the others, and when I can, I crawl there.

It was indeed a strange sight to see this figure, bowed with age and clothed in the morning dress of seventy years ago, seated in the club dining-room amongst a number of very young gentlemen scrupulously attired for ball-going, and utterly unable to account for such an unfamiliar presence.

Finally, this forcible expression of opinion by Lord Wolseley deserves notice:—

*Viscount Wolseley to Lady Borthwick.*

*WAR OFFICE, Saturday.*

My interests are absorbed in the British Empire. I believe that within a radius of four miles from where I write, there is poverty and misery and vice in such amounts that if all the energies of the charitable amongst us were devoted to help and relieve these unfortunates of our own race who are near us, even then much would still remain to be done. Until I have seen all these home wants relieved, my hand and heart refuse to go out into distant countries.

How can I in my conscience give five shillings to help Arabs in their delightful climate, where living is a luxury, and whose wants are small to enable one to live there, when I know that round the corner here there are many hungry English children crying to their mother for bread?

My wife's "scrap cart" brings us into contact, or rather to the knowledge, of so much want and so many wants, spiritual, medical, and hunger, that I shudder as I think of the good dinner and very pleasant evening I enjoyed yesterday at Hampstead.

These extracts may give some indication of the variety and depth of Lady Glenesk's interests. In spite of

unsatisfactory health, she possessed a keen social instinct and never lost the zest of living. One who remembers the house in Eaton Place declares that "you always met there everyone you wished to know and nobody you did not wish to know"; and this talent for entertaining was not likely to fail as the scope for indulging it grew wider. So comprehensive was her energy that whilst her husband was member for South Kensington her visiting list included 2500 names. But her letters show that she was equally eager in serious matters, and was not of a frivolous or superficial temperament. She may be fairly represented, therefore, as the competent helpmeet to whom Sir William Harcourt offered his congratulations.

So much it seemed proper to say in illustration of one vital part of Lord Glenesk's life. As a suitable ending to the chapter we may give one of Lady Glenesk's contributions to the *Morning Post*.

#### COUNT PAHLEN AND THE EMPEROR

##### NAPOLEON I.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MORNING POST."

SIR,—The life and surroundings, public and private, of the Great Napoleon are occupying so much public attention that I venture to relate a few small incidents, their principal interest being that they were narrated by one who had actually known and conversed with Napoleon when he was First Consul. I am speaking of Count Pahlen, whose acquaintance I made at Nice in 1884. When living in England he had been an intimate friend of my family, and received me with the greatest kindness. Count Pahlen was then in his 96th year. He died two years after, aged 98, having been born the same year as Lord Byron. I found a tall, remarkably handsome old man, with faculties absolutely unimpaired, and a memory as clear as if he had been half a century younger. He was in the habit of taking in the newspapers of five

different nations, and delighted in conversing on the present and the past. He asked me to come and sit with him whenever I had time to spare. I told him one day I was reading the *Memoirs of Madame de Rémusat*. To my surprise he answered, "I knew her very well, and her son was one of my most intimate friends." He then went on to discourse on the First Consul, on the Empress Joséphine, on Queen Hortense, and on Marie Louise, all of whom he had personally known. He described his meeting the First Consul in Paris. He was invited to attend a small reception with several others, mostly French. They were received, he said, in a small room with very little furniture, and they stood with their backs against the wall. The door opened, and the First Consul entered unattended. He was very small and wore a grey coat; he carried his hands behind his back, holding a little three-cornered black hat. To each person he walked up and said, "Qui êtes-vous?" pointing with his finger. Pahlen described that this brusque mode of address considerably abashed the company. To the members of the *vieille Cour* he was not conciliatory. On one of them naming himself Napoleon rejoined, "Et votre femme, comment va-t-elle; est elle toujours sage?" To a distinguished marquise, having demanded, "Qui êtes-vous?" he continued, "Que vous avez les cheveux roux." "En effet, citoyen," answered the lady; "et vous êtes le premier homme qui m'a fait l'honneur de me le dire." Then came Pahlen's turn, who, being young and much over 6 ft., had effaced himself in a corner. On his telling the First Consul his name, he merely answered, "Oui, oui, je sais, je sais, je sais." What, I suppose, he knew was that Count Pahlen was the son of the Count Pahlen who was concerned in the murder of the Emperor Paul. Pahlen was himself, I have been told since, although quite a boy, by a curious irony of fate, page in waiting at the end of the corridor while the Emperor was being strangled. Of Joséphine he said "Elle n'était pas très belle, mais la grâce et le charme personnifiés." He said that there was no doubt of her enormous personal influence on the Emperor, who believed her to be the star of his destiny; and so she proved to be. Hortense he described as taller, larger, and cleverer than her mother, but without the same degree of subtle charm. Marie Louise he remembered on her first



entrance into society, having been at Vienna when she made her *début*. He described her as shy, quiet, and with no great charm either of person or of intellect. He was well acquainted with all the Bonaparte family, and ascribed the Emperor's final treatment of Joséphine much to their influence and intrigue. They had never been favourable to her. One incident he related which he said he had never seen mentioned in any book. Napoleon, it seems, with all his extraordinary military and administrative genius, after he became Emperor had a curious love of pageantry and of dress. He remembered distinctly a gala at the theatre at which the Emperor and all his Marshals and Court were dressed in Spanish costumes. The Emperor afterwards held a reception in the *foyer*, and Pahlen and several others were present. He said he never remembered that this fancy, which was most unbecoming, was repeated. Joséphine seems to have had a sincere friendship for Count Pahlen, and he visited her once in her retreat at Malmaison. She retained her fascination to the end. All this and much more was repeated to me by Count Pahlen with the greatest accuracy. He spoke with the clearness and vividness of recollection as if these events had taken place but yesterday, and retailed most minutely every fact. His memory was indeed remarkable in all things. There is one small anecdote I may mention relative to Count Pahlen himself. I was present when he and Prince Gortschakoff met after 20 years of estrangement. Prince Gortschakoff was 86, Count Pahlen 96, although he appeared the younger of the two. After parting with many compliments, each said of the other, "*Il a beaucoup baissé, c'est qu'il est très vieux.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lady Bathurst was taken to see Count Pahlen. This should be noted by those who take an interest in links with the past.



## CHAPTER X

1870-71

AMONGST those who had sent congratulations on the occasion of Algernon Borthwick's marriage was a lady whose name has already been mentioned. Mrs Norton's career has passed into biographical history. Somebody has called her the female Byron ; and there were superficial points of resemblance. She had rare beauty, she was a poetess, she had social status, and it was known that her life was not serene. On the other hand, she bore her afflictions in a spirit very different from his passionate rage. She had no physical infirmity to torment her ; she did not seek consolation in eccentricity ; and she did not write imperishable verses—although she had inherited ample talent with the name of Sheridan. She had corresponded with Borthwick for many years, but as her letters are often without address, and nearly always without date, it is difficult to place them in their right order. Her married life, as everybody knows, was not happy, and she had consequently to endure the animosity of her husband's relations. On one occasion she writes to ask that her presence at a drawing-room may be particularly noticed in the *Post*. They have been saying that she could not possibly go to court, she explains: if any Mrs Norton were there it must be the wife of another brother.

*Mrs Norton to A. Borthwick.*

Now it is a mere nothing I would ask of you ; somehow to notice my being amongst those who pay their respects to Her Majesty on this occasion. It is the first public reunion I shall have attended since I lost my poor Fletcher, who died just as he was appointed Secretary of Legation at Athens, and whose loss is to me irreparable. It is a "mourning" drawing-room or perhaps I would not go even now, for the world is bitter to me and blank since he went, but I have still—and I suppose while I live I shall always have—a sore feeling about those Court appearances as a matter of reputation ; and that is why I write to you.

Again :

I am very much obliged to you for doing what I wished, and touched by the manner in which it was done. I am quite sure it will do all I desired outside the small circle of friends where I need no help beyond their own kindly feeling towards me. Sometimes I think it strange that I should still care what is said, but it is as the French say, "plus fort que moi," when I hear speeches such as I wrote to you reported and gossiped round.

She had felt the death of her son Fletcher very keenly : "My sweet Fletcher thanked and praised me all his life." Of her son Brinsley she always speaks affectionately ; indeed, they were companions in domestic adversity ; but he suffered from permanently bad health, and, it would appear, had an impetuous temper. The mother aimed at a policy of dignified silence, so far as that was possible, in the face of insinuation ; Brinsley showed a disposition to dash into correspondence, and even into print, which she felt to be embarrassing. In one letter she speaks of "the folly of his attempting to answer an article he never saw . . . such an amazing letter as he had written could only be laughed at by strangers. . . ." Again : "Brinsley has been at the point of death and is still very poorly . . . he has been

out of health for years. . . . It is a great misfortune to be, as he is, without a profession. Better a busy overworked life than a life without work. I write to you to-day from my bed—partly worry, partly a rheumatic attack."

On one occasion she found herself in the county court. She had felt called upon to admonish the governess of Brinsley's children, and her fault-finding had such far-reaching consequences that the father of the young lady proceeded against her. "I know how instead of the real, the unreal will be made out; the poor helpless governess and the rich cruel lady with the known and clouded name," wrote poor Mrs Norton. "I need not assure you that instead of being unkind or unjust to this young woman, I was the very reverse."

She often complains of rheumatic attacks; and her vexations are many. There is another trouble about rates or taxes. "You have little idea," she writes, "how insolent and careless, where there is no master of a house, these people can be. I can't get an answer out of any of them—only threats of law."

It is pleasant to turn from such themes to other topics.

*Mrs Norton to A. Borthwick.*

It was a very pleasant and welcome refreshment to me, confined to my room as I am, to find so very favourable and well written a review of my little poem in the *Post* this morning . . . . it will do the poem great service, for it makes the purport of it clear at once instead of merely praising the poetry.

I see your printer has discarded my Roman capitals to the substantives and put small type, but I think it had better stand as I wrote it. I know . . . . as a rule the use of capitals is vulgarity in printing . . . . but my use of them in this instance has one of those fanciful little meanings which artists and poets nurse in their brains. . . . I am pleased at doing that small courtesy to the paper that has done me so many.

In other letters she discusses her novels, especially *Stuart of Dunleath*.

Her harassed spirit found repose at length when she married, after her husband's death, Sir William Stirling Maxwell, himself a widower, and a man whose intellect and character she could duly appreciate. But she died a year later (1878), not long surviving her son, who had meanwhile succeeded to the barony of Grantley, the title of his father's family.

Borthwick's marriage was to affect his life fundamentally. We have seen that he let the *Owl* expire because his bachelor habits were to be changed. But that was only an outward and visible sign. New associations were coming with growing obligations. The work which he had already done was enough to mark him as a man of spirit. He felt that his labour had not met with adequate reward, and he was not languidly content with his position on the staff of the paper. But his existence was pleasant and prosperous, and he was not impatient. Now all the ambition of his nature was to be aroused: he was to bestir himself in more directions than one. The following letter to Mr Rideout is undated. One cannot say exactly at what period Borthwick considered he had "conquered the old prejudice," but it must have been written about this time, and is important by reason of its strong advocacy of the penny paper. This must be borne in mind in view of subsequent events.

*A. Borthwick to W. J. Rideout.*

The *Manchester Courier* confirms the *Globe* of the other night and shows that the impressions of a new generation are other than one would wish them to be. The world has for-

gotten the days of Palmerston and the time when from being the last I worked the *Post* up to the second place of London journalism. We ought then to have become the first penny paper, and we should then have taken a higher ground and have obtained a better place than the *Telegraph*. Your uncle would not listen to it, contented to receive back his debt with interest and profits. He was averse from embarking never so small a capital in enterprise. Since that time the creation of the penny Press has naturally dwarfed us. The *Times* is always the *Times*, but the *Standard* and *Telegraph* are great powers, while the *Pall Mall* and *Echo* are no insignificant journals. When there is a crisis I can always have, as you see, the best news; but crises only come rarely, and in the meantime the new generation has come to look on the *Post* as a mere fashionable paper and are consequently as amazed at real news appearing in its columns as if it had been published in the *Court Journal*. I have to work as of old against the prejudice which I conquered fifteen years ago, but which I have now anew to combat, thanks to the blindness of proprietors who insisted on maintaining a stagnant position instead of moving forward with the progress of events.

Borthwick's honeymoon was to be followed by distracting calls. The Franco-Prussian war was raging, and he was forced to sacrifice his private inclinations to the absorbing demands of his office. It is not easy to put his letters into chronological order, because they are only dated at best with the day of the week; but an allusion here and there shows us when they were written.

It is unnecessary to relate the series of events which led up to the crisis. On 4th July 1870 French jealousy of Prussia was aggravated by the announcement that a Hohenzollern prince had been permitted to announce his willingness to accept the throne of Spain. In face of the rage which this provoked, the project was declared to be abandoned on the 12th. Bismarck, however, meant to fight. The Emperor was at Ems,

so that he was not able at the moment to influence his master's mind; but a telegram which reached him in Berlin he did contrive to edit so skilfully that its publication stung the pride of France as he designed, and action became inevitable. War was declared on the 15th.

Marshal Bazaine was appointed to the chief command on the 8th of August, which fixes the date of Borthwick's visit to Paris. From there he writes to his wife:—

. . . . On the 2nd of July the Emperor said to Prince Metternich that he now felt confident of the peace of Europe and of transmitting the crown to his son at his death. On the 4th of July the Hohenzollern candidate was announced, et puis!!

Again:

The people here are full of excitement. Princess — brought her jewels to the Embassy in a cab yesterday to send them to England. Prince Metternich wanted to send his archives to Lord Lyons. The English and Americans are pouring out of Paris before the lowering storm, which is going to sweep away the Napoleon dynasty. I had a chat with Lord Lyons to-day: the Emperor has made over the army command to Bazaine. Lord Lyons thought with me that if the French suffer another defeat,<sup>1</sup> Europe will intervene to work on the moderation of Prussia, and spare the too great humiliation of France. If Prussia gains the complete unity of Germany, and peace, that should content her.

Only last Saturday the Duc de Grammont,<sup>2</sup> speaking of peace, said to Lyons, "No peace till we have reduced Prussia to the Duchy of Brandenburg." Next day he changed his tone. . . . I hear for certain that the Emperor's baggage has been sent to Chalons,<sup>3</sup> so you see retreat is the order of the day. My affairs are marching all right and I hope that to-morrow you may congratulate me.

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<sup>1</sup> The battle of Woerth had been fought on the 6th August.

<sup>2</sup> The Foreign Minister.

<sup>3</sup> MacMahon entered Chalons on the 16th; the Emperor on the 20th; the Prussians on the 25th.



Borthwick saw a great deal of the French Ambassador in London, the Marquis de la Valette, and was able to watch the reflection of events at the Embassy.

"I dined with him last night," he writes, "and was able to keep his spirits up. Prince Murat was here yesterday and brought over his wife and children. He fought at Woerth with MacMahon, who behaved like a lion. At the close of the fight he ordered his staff to remain where they were and threw himself at the head of the last charge: but the staff went too, and were nearly all killed. The General escaped. He stormed the Malakoff and has seen many desperate fights, but has never had a scratch. When all was over he lit a cigar and, ordering the retreat, superintended it in person. . . . Country papers are applying for the *Post* news by telegraph at £100 a year apiece. I have three applicants, and shall try to increase them to ten at least. This is very important. It is wonderful if only one sticks to work how money can be created. . . . How I long to be with you! Lavalette said, 'Are you going shooting to Scotland? I believe if the French occupied London, you English would still go shooting!'"

Thursday night:—

I dined with the poor French to-night: quel débâcle! Dear old Lavalette tried to be hospitable: "Mangez donc de ça . . . ." and then he would bury his face in his hands. "Et l'Empereur s'il a seulement à diner! Ce cœur si doux et tendre! Personne près de lui!" . . . . I had no comfort to give, yet they clung to every word one uttered.

The next letter probably refers to the fighting on the 16th and 18th, when the French claimed to have repulsed the enemy, although the Prussians continued to announce the retreat of all before them.

A great change is taking place in the prospects of the war. The French are rallying and coming up to time, while the Prussians are getting wearied. At the Embassy the Prussians are very low to-day. All this promises a long war. No peace is likely to be negotiated.

Sunday night :—

Dined at Lavalette's with two new attachés—over 40 of course, or they would be at the war—with two pretty wives. Full of resistance. They swear MacMahon has 120,000 old soldiers and will lick the Crown Prince. The telegraph may tell you the contrary ere this arrives, but there can be no doubt as to the pluck of the French.

Aug. 20 :—

We had a dinner that was very jolly. . . . Lavalette ordered his carriage at ten, but no one dreamt of leaving till we suddenly found that it was one o'clock. As he is invariably in bed by eleven, I conclude he liked his company. C. V. [Charles Villiers] came to the *Owl* room and learnt the news of the great Prussian victory (the king's). I was so glad they did not send it to the Garrick to me.

This refers to the French retreat from Chalons as the Prussians under the King and the Crown Prince advanced. The memory of the *Owl* was preserved in the name given to one room in the *Morning Post* office.

On 25th July the world was startled by the publication in the *Times* of a secret treaty of 1866 whereby Prussia undertook, in certain circumstances, to aid and abet France in annexing Belgium. After a good deal of recrimination the two Powers concerned accepted Lord Granville's invitation to join in a new treaty for guaranteeing Belgium's integrity. This was signed on 9th August. Of subsequent proceedings we read in two letters written on the same day—24th August :—

You will have read my leader to-day about the transport of Prussian convoys through Belgium. Well, that leader was so conclusive and so thoroughly did its work that Granville and Gladstone, who had given in to the Prussian proposition, have to-night withdrawn their sanction and have by telegraph altered

the position of our guaranteed neutral state. There is a triumph for the *Post*, and shows how much I can do by remaining to my intense self-punishment at the mill. . . . I dined with Lavalette. He telegraphed my leader of yesterday bodily to the Empress, and Latour d'Auvergne wrote him at once by her desire to give me her warmest personal thanks for defending a woman in the hour of danger. I don't care for princes or empresses, but I do care to "defend a female in distress" . . . so I was proud to think I was instrumental in delivering the Empress from the calumny the *Times* had raised against her. Sir — came to-day to kneel at my feet and beg for mercy because the *Post*, "such an influential paper," was demolishing him. . . . This is amusing and pleasant, the feeling of power.

On the same day :—

The enclosed has been sent to me, and you will gather from it that the pen as well as the sword can sometimes prove of value to ladies in distress . . . while I know that I have been of still more vital use to France *and to England* by stopping the proposed violation of Belgian neutrality. The Belgians placed themselves in our hands, and Granville and Gladstone urged upon France to listen to the Prussian proposal, saying that it was one of imperative necessity and that France would incur a heavy responsibility if she declined it. These words are of immense significance in a diplomatic document. Well ; I wrote an article which showed up the whole intrigue. Our two statesmen at Walmer<sup>1</sup> saw the truth of it. The article was telegraphed to Paris and gave the French Government courage to decline. The proposition was withdrawn and the Belgians instructed to reject the Prussian proposal, which they have accordingly done. I thus won a victory for France and for fair play, and saved the English Government from the certain penalty which they would have had to pay hereafter to Parliament for advising a departure from neutrality within ten days of signing a treaty solemnly guaranteeing it. What a loss is Lord Clarendon ! Now

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Granville was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. Neither Lord Fitzmaurice nor Lord Morley relates these negotiations in detail.

to come to the personal question you are so fond of: what good is all this to A. B.? Well, first of all, he has done his duty. That alone, even to a very little fellow, is a great satisfaction. . . . All these things are known by those who conduct public affairs. . . . I said to Bulwer in your words, that I wanted now to fight for my own hand and be known. "My dear fellow," said he, "everybody knows you."

The enclosure of which he speaks is addressed by command of the Empress to Lavalette, and states that:

L'Impératrice a lu avec la plus vive satisfaction l'article du *Morning Post* au sujet de la dépêche Prussienne prétendant que sa Majesté aurait sollicité la médiation de la Reine Victoria. L'auteur de cet article, M. Borthwick, en démentant avec énergie une aussi absurde nouvelle a rendu à la dignité de notre souveraine l'hommage qui lui est dû. L'Impératrice . . . . vous prie de transmettre à M. Borthwick tous ses remerciements.

It must be admitted that this was gratifying corroboration of Sir H. Bulwer's assurance that "everybody knew him."

Undated:—

*A. Borthwick to his Wife.*

I had a long talk with Musurus,<sup>1</sup> of which much is in to-day's leader. He says d'Harcourt observed to him, "What a splendid leader in the *Post*!" He said, "Yes, the *Post* is Borthwick and Borthwick is Palmerston; first for England, then France, and then the Eastern policy. You know how true the *Post* was to France in her misfortunes. Borthwick is imperialist, but before that for France, and always stands by her to this hour." . . . They separated singing my praises.

This letter must be of later date, but it should find a place here beside the following, which is also undated, but must have been written during the war:—

<sup>1</sup> Turkish Ambassador in London, 1856-1885.

No ! Nobody thinks the *M.P.* too French. Look at to-day, Friday's, leader and to-morrow's. Nobody can call us French. The feeling of sympathy for the brave people who are getting the worst of the fight, and for the Emperor and Empress, grows every day stronger, and we get many letters from readers thanking us for the line we take. Our wish is to do justice, and our sentiment of pity does not blind us to facts or make us the less appreciate the pluck of the Germans and all their noble qualities.

It is evident that Borthwick's wife lost no time in advocating Parliament as a proper object of ambition. His letters to her are continuous and always affectionate : he makes her his confidante. Only once there is a note of impatience : "You are in such a violent hurry," he writes ; "you no sooner hear of a seat than you expect to have it in three days." His heart was clearly in the *Post*, and he loved his work. "All I wish to do in visiting is to please you. For myself I had far rather work. I hate the idea of killing poor beasts when so many thousand men are being wounded in like manner with guns. However, that sort of sensitiveness soon goes off."

One cannot be interested in one's subject without wishing to have details. One would like to know something of the household state, and it is noteworthy that throughout this intimate correspondence there is no allusion to money matters ; certainly no sign of anxiety. The fact that Parliament was in contemplation shows that the circumstances were prosperous, though it is conceivable that Borthwick's hesitation was partly due to prudence. They began married life in Ebury Street, and moved a year later to Eaton Place. The following pathetic note was sent to the former address:—

*Napoleon III. to A. Borthwick.*

CAMDEN PLACE,<sup>1</sup>  
le 22 Mars 1871.

MON CHER MONSIEUR BORTHWICK,—Je vous remercie de vos félicitations à l'occasion de mon arrivée en Angleterre. Je suis heureux de penser que je retrouverai encore quelques anciens amis dans un pays hospitalier. Je serai charmé de vous voir ici soit demain, soit après demain vers 1 heure. —Croyez à tous mes sentiments,

NAPOLEON.

The Emperor had arrived two days before. On 26th February peace had been concluded. On the 28th the Emperor had been formally deposed and given permission to leave Wilhelmshöhe, where he had remained since Sedan, as a prisoner of war.

It is usual to compare the career of Napoleon III. with that of his uncle only in a spirit of disparagement, but to a contemplative mind the former presents almost as much cause for wonder, even admiration. Apart from the grand advantage of name and tradition, the nephew started with few elements in his favour. He was not wanted. He had to make his opportunities and to bide his time. After his fiasco at Boulogne in 1840 a weaker man might well have been crushed; but during his six years of imprisonment at Ham his splendid courage never failed him. Then came the escape, and the gradual pressing on towards his goal. Next, the Imperial Crown, and for a time glitter of empire, as brilliant and transient as that in which the first Emperor had gloried. Without any assistance from an ambitious marriage, he filled the part of sovereign becomingly. He did not stamp on Europe, but he stood up bravely amongst the proudest hereditary kings, and guaranteed to France her honourable estate

<sup>1</sup> Chislehurst.



amongst all nations. Then the irreparable blunder; all the patience and the striving and the victory were undone, and the broken soldier came back to be comforted by some of the former friends of the neglected lodger in King Street, who had once enrolled himself as a special constable. Not even the prisoner of St Helena had better cause to murmur "*Vanitas, Vanitas,*" than the exile at Chislehurst who had aspired to everything, achieved everything, and seen it all collapse in utter wreckage. Nothing remained but the transformation which he had effected in the structure of Paris. Whether the outlay incurred by Baron Haussmann under his authority was economically judicious is a matter for argument: the fact remains that the Emperor left behind him the most magnificent and fascinating capital in Europe.

Unlike his uncle he had at least the solace of family life, but there must have been an added bitterness in his thoughts about his son. It is unlikely that he can have nourished any hopes at such a time that the star in which he had trusted so implicitly could ever again emerge from its eclipse. Yet encouragement was not entirely denied him. There is a curious letter, with no date, addressed to Borthwick from Camden Place. The London papers had given an account of a scene which was reported to have occurred there. A crowd, it was alleged, had collected in front of the house crying "*Vive Napoleon IV.!*" and the Empress had come out on to the balcony to acknowledge the cheers. Borthwick was now assured that it was the Prince Imperial's governess who had been led by curiosity to show herself, and that the Empress was much distressed to think that she should be deemed capable of trying

to make capital of a demonstration in the midst of their desolation. From this time forth Borthwick was to remain steadfast in his loyalty to the family. Many years afterwards he received a message from the Empress, who, he is told, "looks upon you as one of her most faithful friends, and she desires me to tell you so."

During the late summer of 1871 Borthwick received a long letter from Mr Childers, who was travelling abroad on account of bad health. It contains a wide review of the European situation, too comprehensive, and perhaps too ephemeral, to bear reproduction but worth noticing for the sake of one sentence which reflects credit on the writer's power of anticipating events:

Our position between Germany, Austria, and Italy, on one side, and Russia, France, and Turkey, on the other, will be a fine study! All this may be a dream, but you know how many phases of politics are so at first to most people.

## CHAPTER XI

1872-1878

IN 1872 Borthwick ceased to be titular editor. Mr (afterwards Sir William) Hardman was introduced into the office, and remained there until his death in 1890. He won for himself a foremost place in the catalogue of editors, but it must be understood that Borthwick never surrendered the powers of direction and control.

Amongst the private papers of 1872 there is a letter addressed to the *Post* by the celebrated Claimant, thanking the public for supporting him in his appeal against the refusal of Mr Justice Brett to admit him to bail. He talks of the grossest conspiracy ever concocted, and declares his confidence in his power to prove that he is "Sir Roger Charles Doughty Tichborne." He throws in a few disjointed pieces of evidence, and observes that his ultimate triumph only depends on generous assistance towards procuring the services of counsel.

In connection with this gentleman there is the following comment in a letter from Mrs Norton:—

I was yesterday at . . . breakfast at Camden Hill. Lady Beaconsfield was there with a drawing of Sir R. Tichborne in her pocket. He is indeed more like a large turtle awaiting the day of his conversion into soup, than any other created animal or insect.

Perhaps one of the most striking features of an editor's life is the extraordinary variety of communications that reach him. Nothing, for example, could be in more startling contrast with the foregoing document than a contribution from a statesman in the form of a poem. Those who remember the excitement that raged around the Tichborne case will perhaps not be surprised that a letter from the Claimant should have seemed worth preserving. For very different reasons we can account for Borthwick's laying aside a production which we have every reason to suppose is uncommon, and must therefore possess a peculiar interest.

The editor was also the recipient of intelligence from the Court of the ex-King of Hanover. After the annexation of the kingdom by Prussia in 1866 it was rumoured that George V. intended to return to England as Duke of Cumberland, and Borthwick endeavoured to throw light upon the obscure problem of what rank would be proper to him and his children in our royal family. As the solution was never called for, it need not be offered now. In the circumstances it was natural that the matters which formed the subject of correspondence were rather personal than those of state, and these also may be left alone.

Nothing more is heard of the Parliamentary project until the next year, when Mrs Borthwick had evidently been conspiring with the lady who had married, as her fourth husband, Mr Chichester Fortescue, who is known in history as Frances, Countess Waldegrave, and who is generally indicated in familiar correspondence by the name of Frank. She, it appears, had been inciting the Liberal Whip to catch a promising recruit: "Arthur

Peel<sup>1</sup> intends communicating with him at once upon the subject," she writes to Mrs Borthwick:—

I can't tell you how glad we should be to see him in Parliament on our side. I have so true an affection for you, and warm respect for him, besides a great admiration for his talents, clear intellect, and honourable character. . . .

Mr Peel knew his business too well to let an opportunity slip:—

"If I am wrong in the supposition, I hope you will excuse me," he writes, "but mention has been made to me that you are not unwilling to enter Parliament. I do not, of course, know whether you have any constituency in view, but if I can be in any way instrumental in consulting your wishes by giving you information . . . it will give me much pleasure to see you."

But the supposition was certainly wrong in one sense. We may be certain that Borthwick at no time contemplated joining the Liberal party, and Lord Peel permits me to say that he has no recollection of any such advance being made. It was his duty, however, to be on the alert when he heard of a desirable candidate, and his action is fully accounted for by Lady Waldegrave's letter. In this an allusion to expenses confirms the impression that Borthwick doubted whether he would be wise to undertake all the cost of an election and a constituency at present. But beyond this we may be forgiven if we surmise that he had to remonstrate with his wife, as he had done once before, for being in such a violent hurry. She doubtless saw the great advantage to be gained by entrance into Parliament; her own family traditions were, of course, Whiggish; and finding no such sharp distinctions of parties as were

<sup>1</sup> Viscount Peel.

to come later, she may well have become a captive to the recruiting powers of Lady Waldegrave. The aspiration was quite legitimate, but it was not to be gratified so quickly, and Borthwick pursued the path which led him for the present through calm and smooth surroundings.

The lull in foreign affairs gave him leisure to attend to the literary side of his profession: the following letter from Ouida implies that he had been reviewing books:—

Many, many thanks for all you so kindly say about *The Dog*. The notice was a very agreeable one in the *M.P.*, only I wish they had quoted a little more. I always think that is so advantageous for a book. The book I am now writing you will delight in. I fancy it will be ready about January, and I will direct printers to send you a set of unbound sheets, so that you may see it before the rest of the world, for I do so value your thorough and artistic sympathy.

In January 1874 Parliament was suddenly dissolved. On 21st January Mr Gladstone had announced to the Queen that he proposed to recommend this course to the Cabinet on the 23rd. After this meeting he wrote again:—

The Cabinet unanimously concurred. . . . It is as yet a profound secret, but to-morrow morning it will be placed before the world. . . . There can be no doubt that a large portion of the public will at first experience that emotion of surprise which your Majesty so very naturally felt on receiving Mr Gladstone's letter.<sup>1</sup>

The surprise was indeed dramatic and the secret was well kept. On 24th January Borthwick received a letter from one of the chief organisers of the Conservative party:—

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Gladstone*, ii. 486.



I only got your note at home last night on my return from the Carlton at 12 o'clock. . . . There was a rumour at the Carlton as to the dissolution, but it was traced to Webb, the butler, and no one believed it. . . . Even Vesuvius has the taste to give notice of his intentions. I am glad you telegraphed to Colonel Taylor,<sup>1</sup> and hope he has made arrangements. . . .

This disposes of all idea that Borthwick was in doubt as to the party to which he should attach himself, although at the time his overtures led to no arrangement.

Lady Waldegrave's husband lost his seat at the general election and was created Lord Carlingford. The refusal of Borthwick in the previous year to enlist under the Liberal banner clearly led to no estrangement; Lord Carlingford indeed was inspiring articles in the *Post*. Bismarck was engaged in a constitutional struggle, and Borthwick was inclined to watch his policy with suspicion.

Lord Carlingford writes: "I am very glad you have made such good use of the papers which I sent you. I don't look at the matter from the orthodox point of view of the *M.P.*, but I hate Bismarck's legislation and administration both on principle and as a question of policy." And he encloses a letter which he has received praising the *Post* articles and thanking him for having enabled "the English public to learn something concerning German affairs somewhat more consistent with the facts than the Bismarck-dictated intelligence that generally reaches the English Press."

Borthwick had the best possible means of knowing what was going on in Berlin. His wife's first cousin

<sup>1</sup> The Conservative Whip.

was the wife of Lord Odo Russell,<sup>1</sup> and Borthwick was fortunate, both on private and public grounds, in possessing their friendship. At the end of the year the Ambassador wrote to him from Berlin :—

. . . Your letter of the 20th interested me very much. Your news was news to me, for I had but vague suspicions about the facts you were able to communicate. I shall be grateful for more at any time if possible. Well do I remember our talk about the East, and often do I think of our bright pleasant day on the Island in Richmond Park. . . . It is said we are to have the Arnim trial over again, as both parties intend to appeal.<sup>1</sup> . . . B. wants to educate his party into voting with him under all circumstances, and *that* the conscientious German M.P.'s cannot make up their minds to do.

At this time there had been considerable comment on the fact that the Queen had not left Balmoral to receive the Empress of Russia, who had come to England in order to be present at the birth of the Duchess of Edinburgh's child. It may be remembered that the *Owl* had not scrupled to dwell upon the inconvenience caused by her Majesty's absence in Scotland during a political crisis. This time Borthwick considered the complaint unjust, and he was once more ready to defend, as best he might, a lady improperly attacked. He wrote an article, therefore, pointing out that the visit was private and personal, and that the Empress had particularly desired that she might be spared all Court ceremonies. It was a fair and ample apologia, but upon reflection he decided that there had been nothing beyond gossip in society, and that to advertise the

<sup>1</sup> Emily, Lady Ampthill. Mr Russell became Lord Odo by courtesy when his brother succeeded to the Dukedom of Bedford in 1872. He was created Lord Ampthill in 1881.

<sup>2</sup> Count Harry Arnim, formerly Ambassador at Rome and Paris, had been arrested on the charge of refusing to give up official documents.

matter in the Press would be to create the trouble which he desired to allay. And the article remained unpublished.

Nevertheless he was destined to be the champion of royalty. At the end of December Alphonso had been summoned to the throne of Spain ; presently Borthwick received a letter from one of his friends in the official world at Madrid :—

I have great pleasure in congratulating you on the campaign you have so brilliantly carried on in the *M.P.* in favour of our monarchy. The King is much gratified by what you have written, and indeed he could not fail to be so, for your articles are written with the most thorough appreciation of Spanish affairs. The *M.P.* is always to be seen on H.M.'s table.

Before long he was defending the Prince of Wales against a singularly unreasonable attack. His Royal Highness was to preside at a dinner of the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum, and numerous temperance associations were protesting against what they considered to be improper encouragement to the liquor trade. Borthwick had not much difficulty in disposing of this complaint: the Prince Consort had laid the foundation-stones of some of the extension wings; the Prince of Wales was himself Patron of the Institution; three Bishops were coming to the dinner. The most ardent advocates of temperance might look in vain for mischievous consequences from what was nothing but an exertion in the cause of charity.

Borthwick's help was being sought at the same time by Count von Arnim, whose case has been alluded to. The Count was publishing a letter to Bismarck in Berlin and Paris, and wished to produce it in London

also. He writes irreproachable English, but begins with an amusing apology for "not spelling your name quite correctly": it indeed assumes a strange form. He says: "It is not my intention to encroach on your time and your paper, nor do I ask you to take any trouble in my favour"; but he chooses the *Post* as the most desirable means of access to public attention in England.

On 30th May George Borthwick wrote from Damascus an interesting account of the proclamation of Murad V. as Sultan in place of Abdul Aziz, who had been deposed on the preceding day:—

I never witnessed such an impressive sight from the very absence of feeling or excitement. Truly the Turks are an apathetic people. . . . There would have been more commotion in an English school when the master was suddenly changed. . . . I am much pained to hear of the anxiety that Rideout's will has thrown you into of late.

The last sentence brings us to one of the important moments of Borthwick's life.

We have now reached the summer of 1876. Mr Crompton had died in 1858. We have seen that from his first connection with the paper Borthwick had looked forward to owning it some day, and had actually corresponded on the subject with Mr Crompton's executors. We have also seen that after a time he was possessed of an interest to the extent of one-third in the profits of the paper. He had, during Mr Rideout's life, entered into an agreement, by the terms of which he was to be entitled to the first offer in the event of the paper being sold after Mr Rideout's death. In any case he was to have entire control of the paper for life. In order to make his position unassailable Borthwick

eventually sought a decision from the Court of Chancery, and had the satisfaction of getting his claim confirmed. He was master of the situation to this extent, that even if he failed to buy the property, the new purchaser could have no voice in directing its policy: Borthwick was to be sole arbiter of that. It was not perhaps to be expected that anyone would be willing to assume the ownership on such conditions; meanwhile the paper was for sale.

In the body of Mr Rideout's will it was provided that Borthwick should have the option of purchase for a period of two months before any other offer could be considered. In one codicil the price was fixed at £25,000. In another Mr T. L. Coward was given the right of remaining manager for life, or claiming an annuity equivalent to his present salary. There was also a provision for his enjoying a share in the profits of the paper. This made matters rather complicated, and a private arrangement was afterwards made between him and Borthwick to their mutual satisfaction. Mr Coward remained the manager of the paper and the personal friend of the new proprietor: in both capacities he deserved and received an ample measure of gratitude.

Borthwick was naturally unable to put down the purchase money at once, but the assistance he required was forthcoming. Mr Andrew Montagu was a gentleman of property and old family, well enough known in Yorkshire, but not so well known to the public as many men who have been far less intimately connected with public characters and affairs.<sup>1</sup> He it was that

<sup>1</sup> He refused a peerage, for which Lord Beaconsfield wished to recommend him.

enabled Borthwick to seize his opportunity. There were to be occasions later when critical financial situations had to be faced, and on each of these Borthwick could rely upon the same sure help. It is a commonplace that men are apt to forget those who have smoothed their path to success. It is due, therefore, to Borthwick, not less than to Mr Montagu, to say that the obligations rendered were amply acknowledged. Some years later the following letter was written:—

*A. Borthwick to Mr Montagu.*

. . . I had worked for Rachel and for Leah. Unlike the patriarch, I was always disappointed, and on a third occasion I was about to see all the fruit of my life's work snatched from me, when you stepped forward with that generosity which you have shown to so many, and suddenly furnished me with all the armour and appointments necessary to my enterprise. I had made three fortunes out of the *Morning Post* for others: you have empowered me to make one for myself. And now the hour has come when prosperity has enabled me to repay all that you advanced. . . . But I feel more in debt than ever, for in no way can I requite your friendship or offer you more than truest gratitude.

Borthwick's position in the office was perhaps changed in name rather than importance. Throughout these years he had "been the *Post*," as it was said, but now he enjoyed the added dignity of ownership. Mr Rideout had never attempted to dictate; henceforward nobody was to have so much as a nominal right to dictate. And this new position came to him at a time of renewed political commotion.

On 11th August 1876 Borthwick received this confidential note:—



MY DEAR B.,—You will be asked to-night to print a short announcement to-morrow not without interest. Mr D. goes to the Upper House, and will not, after to-night, again stand up to fight in the old arena.

The step is not one of necessity, but he has earned the comparative repose which his lighter duties will afford. He is, indeed, better than he was two years ago.—Ever yours,

MONTAGU CORRY.

Disraeli was indeed approaching his zenith. He had brought for his Sovereign's acceptance the title of Empress; he had assumed the earldom which was the fitting complement of his amazing career; and he was about to reach the summit of his power and popularity at the conclusion of the Congress of Berlin. War in the Balkans was imminent, and he had to make it clear that British interests and British opinion were not to be neglected. Before peace was actually broken, Borthwick received this letter from Sir James Hudson, formerly our Minister at Turin:

*Sir James Hudson to A. Borthwick.*

. . . . It depends so much from which standpoint you look at the Eastern question that I avoid entering upon discussion respecting it. I was employed by Palmerston in the East in 1836, and he wanted to send me back in 1863; and I would have gone had he been Foreign instead of Prime Minister, because I knew Palmerston and he knew me, and I had his whole confidence and could speak and write to him as though to my own brother. But the case is different when your ideas are either filtered through an official sieve or wire-drawn by an uncongenial hand. . . . I believe the English policy of bolstering up the effete Turk is wrong on national grounds. Our line is from London to Bombay—Lahore—Herat (Palmerston wanted to run the line by Herat to Calcutta). . . . What then have we to do with Turkey on the Danube or at Constantinople? No—our game should be

to raise up Christian States in Bulgaria, Roumelia, Albania : place a Prince of our own House at Constantinople, but ourselves ought to look to St Jean d'Acre and Syria, because the owner of Syria in all times has been master of all the lands from Mesopotamia to the Nile. What does it matter to me when once I have established a Prince of my own house at Constantinople whether Greeks, Slavs, Bulgarians, Armenians, Servians and Albanians quarrel with Russia or not? They are sure to quarrel among themselves. . . . I wish to cut no man's throat, but simply to save my own. I cannot abandon my Indian Empire, even if I wished it . . . . and I tell you after having studied the question under Palmerston and Herbert Taylor and Davud Pasha . . . . men who knew Turkey as well as you and I know our breeches pockets, that our present line of policy is a mistake. Keep an eye of course on the general turn of events; but be ready when the Turk fails to have a Prince to put in his papooshes. But at the very moment of that fall the British flag should be flying in Syria. I think this course should effectually muzzle Russia, satisfy Austria, mystify Bismarck, and content France, who never can wish to see us absolute masters in Egypt. What does it matter what [people] say about Turkey in *Europe*? The question vital to us is who is to succeed the Turk in Syria. The day and the hour will come when the reins will drop from the Turks' nerveless fingers. If Pam had been alive, I would let you see who would drive that coach.

In conjunction with these remarks about India it may be fitting to note a letter which reached Borthwick about the same time from an Indian official, begging him to advocate the establishment there of

an Imperial Senate or Diet. . . . If you do not follow up H.R.H.'s<sup>1</sup> visit and the new Title with some such recognition of Indian nationality we will have much discontent and disappointment, worse than mutiny and rebellion, for you can stamp out the one set of difficulties and begin to govern again; the other demands a long and protracted strife, making all

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<sup>1</sup> The Prince of Wales had recently visited India.

government difficult and neutralising its most assured benefits. So take up the matter, and let the *M.P.* be the pioneer. . . . What about the Turks? Our interests are to my mind for making common cause with them. A Moslem war under the green flag would give us some hard nuts in this country to crack. . . .

Lord Carlingford sang the same song as Sir James Hudson: "Oh for one hour, or one year, of old Pam!" he wrote.

Borthwick yielded to no man in devotion to Palmerston's memory, but he differed from Sir James Hudson in that he was a stout upholder of the Turk. In a long letter, undated, he described the exciting life he was leading, in constant touch with Ambassadors and Ministers, and rejoicing to see that our Government were not going to be led into any line of action prejudicial to Turkey.

*A. Borthwick to his Wife.*

March 1877.

I have no time to tell you the events of to-day. I had a marvellous interview with Schouvaloff<sup>1</sup> in the morning. . . . In the afternoon I went to Carnarvon,<sup>2</sup> then to M. Corry, who told me the Cabinet had decided to be no longer the tool of Russia (*M.P.* triumphant!) and had rejected Schouvaloff's propositions.<sup>3</sup>

I thought it would be kind to tell him, and did so: found him in great excitement: he had had a letter from Lord Derby,<sup>4</sup> who was to have seen him after the Cabinet, putting him off till to-morrow. So I told him the great news, as I had in the '70 war to Lavalette and Bernstorff. Then I went to d'Harcourt and told him, and then to Musurus, who danced with joy and declared I was his son. I should tell you that

<sup>1</sup> Russian Ambassador.

<sup>2</sup> Colonial Secretary.

<sup>3</sup> This must refer to the Russian proposal (March 10) that the Powers should agree to a protocol on Turkish affairs.

<sup>4</sup> Foreign Secretary.

when I was at the Russian's in the morning Munster came in. Later I went to the Duke of Cambridge, and Schouvaloff saw me go in. . . . Dined at St James's. Monty Corry came in and dined beside me. Schouvaloff came in and dined opposite. He thinks I live in the pockets of the Cabinet and manage all England. I am very proud of the *Post's* triumph. M. C. asked a good deal about the *M.P.*—evidently with an object.

War was declared in April 1877. For some time success flowed in upon the Turkish arms, and Borthwick was jubilant. In June he received a letter from a high official in Constantinople, thanking him for his friendship, both on personal grounds and because his "marquante place" in journalism made that friendship of great value. During the summer he wrote to Mrs Borthwick:—

What grand fellows the Turks are: they have beaten the Russians every time. I am enchanted. I shall call to congratulate Musurus to-morrow.

He showed his sympathy in a practical manner by serving on the Stafford House Committee for the relief of sick and wounded Turkish soldiers. The Duke of Sutherland was chairman, and the committee was what is usually called "strong." A special commissioner was sent out to report, and he was able to assure them that both with regard to medical staff and stores the arrangements were working smoothly, and that their efforts had been most valuable and were duly appreciated.

Later in the year he writes as follows:—

*A. Borthwick to Montagu Corry.*

*Dec. 13, 1877.*

MY DEAR MONTY,—I had an important conversation with Count Schouvaloff to-day, of which I send you a précis for Lord B. He said that Turkey, he heard, was for war à

outrance, but that was only the first movement of despair. She would come to terms later. That peace might be obtained by direct negotiations, the vanquished to initiate it, or by mediation. That Berlin and Vienna were averse from such a course, and Paris thought of nothing but its own difficulties. There remained England, but to mediate you must have something behind you. England had nothing. He had felt from the moment when the Government did not dare, "*n'a pas osé*," to ask for two millions and a half last summer, that all was over so far as England was concerned. Her interests would not be touched in the Persian Gulf, for the Russians, so he believed, did not intend to hold Erzeroum; nor in the Suez Canal. As regards Constantinople and the Dardanelles, those were questions, not for the decision of Russia or England, but of all the Powers. Turkey in Europe would escape on cheap terms so far as Russia was concerned, the autonomy of Bulgaria and razing of the fortresses being her chief demand. . . . He said he was not here to criticise the English Cabinet, which had failed "through its own dissensions" to take obvious precautions.

At the end of December the Sultan appealed to the British Government to propose mediation to Russia. Borthwick writes:—

*Dec. 30, '77.*

MY DEAR MONTY,—I saw Shuv<sup>1</sup> after leaving you. He says no chance of acceptance of our mediation. The Russians think it the last gasp of Turkey. After that she will come to direct treaty, which, to the surprise of everyone, will be settled soon. He speaks in polite French with the greatest contempt for us.

And nothing came of the proposal. By this time the tide had turned against Turkey—Plevna fell on 10th December; by 20th January the Russians were at Adrianople. They had fought doggedly against man and nature, for the fighting spirit of the Turk had been scarcely less stubborn and relentless than the snows of

<sup>1</sup> Count Schouvaloff.

the inhospitable mountains. And now in the early days of the new year they gazed in triumph on the minarets of Stamboul. The prize was within reach: could they be restrained from seizing it?

On 10th January 1878 Borthwick delivered an address on the Eastern question at the St James's Hall, and for the first time came before the public conspicuously in his individual rather than his journalistic capacity. It contained a zealous defence of Turkey and a grave indictment of Russia; apart from the criticism which it would naturally arouse on grounds of principle and policy, it was, and still is, a valuable contribution, founded on a wide and accurate knowledge of European history. In contrast to the doctrines of the "sick man" and the "bag and baggage" removal, he demanded, "Who can pretend to tear from the land a people which has struck their root so deeply into it? If they were left undisturbed by foreign intrigue the populations of European Turkey of different races and faiths might live happily together." He held the motive of Russia to be revenge for the Crimean War; Constantinople was to console her for Sebastopol. He denounced the bad faith of the Russians in their attempts to evade the provisions of the Treaty of Paris; he recalled their unwillingness to join in remonstrances against the evil autocracy of Naples; he charged their army with deliberate barbarity in the conduct of the present war; he proclaimed their methods of government to be vicious and their intentions to be selfish and insidious. We were principally concerned on account of India; our Moslem fellow-subjects would not suffer us to stand idle whilst their faith was threatened; and for geographical reasons we could not afford to see the



independence of Turkey and Persia crushed by a Power which we knew had its eyes turned towards our Eastern dominions. Palmerston in 1856 had solemnly warned the Turks that in future they must rely upon themselves; for his part he had faith in the Turks and declined to consider them effete. They had the spirit and the strength to protect their capital from invasion; but that was no reason why we should not have the courage to declare that we had an interest in the matter and that we were determined to maintain it. In true Palmerstonian vein he added: "I own that I could wish that our Cabinet were possessed of more of that backbone which is essential for successful statesmanship—*qui timide rogat docet negari.*"

Congratulations flowed in. One lady wrote to Mrs Borthwick to praise the "*most* beautiful lecture," and adds the surprising comment, "How beautifully he recites! How I would like to put his name in one of my programmes!"; which is an interesting tribute to his range of accomplishments, but a strange connection in which to find it.

Lord Wharncliffe was delighted with the wisdom of the matter, and as to the manner added, "You rise to eloquence." Montagu Corry was there, and wrote to say that "My chief has read 'every word' most carefully and with much advantage." This was the more satisfactory, seeing that Borthwick had been far from holding a brief for the Government.

Of adverse criticism he reports to his wife: "Dilke told me he read my speech to Harcourt, who said, 'Borthwick, in selecting the Turks, has made as great a mistake as the Almighty when he adopted the Jews as the chosen people.'"

On 22nd January 1878 Borthwick wrote to Montagu Corry:—

Schouvaloff expressed himself this evening confident that the Russians will make peace at Adrianople and will not seek to go further. He affects great anxiety about Austria and wants to know what her attitude will be. He also appears to fear any possibility of a quarrel with England; knows nothing of the terms of peace, but is sure they are a direct arrangement with Turkey, and all European interests reserved for ulterior consideration.

An armistice was signed at Adrianople on 31st January, but the Russians continued to close in on Constantinople, and despite Count Schouvaloff's conviction that England was incapable of action, the British fleet made an effective demonstration in the Dardanelles. Great excitement followed these movements. One may judge of this by a rough note sent by Mr Corry requesting Borthwick to contradict certain "lies"; amongst them, that an ultimatum had been sent, that a period of ten days had been named, that England had demanded a port in the Black Sea, that an alliance was being formed between Servia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria, and that Admiral Hornby had been recalled.

On 3rd March the Treaty of Peace was signed at San Stefano, and in due course came the Congress at Berlin, whence Lord Beaconsfield was to bring back his "peace with honour," and find himself on such a crest of triumph that he might have been pardoned for uttering his "Nunc dimittis."

## CHAPTER XII

1878-1880

PARLIAMENT met on 17th January, and we may place here a letter which Borthwick received from a watchful member of the Opposition:—

*C. P. Villiers to A. Borthwick.*

*(Undated.)*

. . . . I don't think the Government have been gaining strength during the recess. All this suspense irritates their own people very much, who hear nothing but grumbling in the country for the badness of trade. The violence of Gladstone and Bright are the chief things in their favour just now. What is said in London is no criterion in these days of what is felt in the country at large. If anything like a decent peace could be made the Government would be very strong; but they will take care at Berlin that nothing of that sort shall occur. This country has been terribly misled as to the good faith or good will towards us at that Court.

There are a few echoes of the war in Borthwick's correspondence of 1878. Our Ambassador at Constantinople, Sir A. H. Layard, in answer to a letter of congratulation on receiving the G.C.B., takes the opportunity of thanking him for "the fair and impartial" treatment of the *Morning Post*. In him Borthwick found a sympathetic spirit; they took similar views. The letter goes on:—

There is yet much to do which requires firmness, decision, and a true appreciation of our next position and duty in the East. Had we understood them from the first, I agree with you in thinking that the danger of war would have been avoided. If war should now be unfortunately forced upon us, it is only by keeping them steadily in view and by showing a determination to uphold them that we can succeed in the end.

In connection with the Stafford House Committee there was the inevitable proposal to give somebody a testimonial, and Borthwick was asked to do the necessary work. He was very busy: "Everybody wants me to be everything. Now I am asked to be a director of the Royal Italian Opera," he says in another letter.

His spirits were sanguine and he was devoted to the paper. In one of his letters to his wife he says:—

I went to see M. C. to-day. . . . Lord B. heard I was there and sent for me and overwhelmed me with questions about you and the children. . . . He looks to me evidently and especially.

After the long European storm there was a general calm; but in South Africa the clouds were gathering fast. We have now reached a period so recent that it is unnecessary to illustrate Borthwick's correspondence with detailed explanations. It would be quite inopportune to repeat the history of the Transvaal which led up to our annexation in 1877, or to appraise the services of Sir Bartle Frere and consider what might have been. It is enough to recall that Cetewayo, having murdered his brothers, had reigned in his father's stead since 1872 and had been duly recognised as king by the British representative. As time went on he began to display a hostile and defiant spirit, and Sir Bartle, as Governor of the Cape, proposed to deal with him firmly. His

policy was not approved, and he was eventually recalled. Whatever should or should not have been done, the fact remains that in January 1879 we had to send an army under Lord Chelmsford against the Zulus. There was a serious disaster at Isandula ; a second one was only averted by the gallantry of the little garrison at Rorke's Drift ; reinforcements had to be hurried out, and at the end of June Sir Garnet Wolseley arrived to take over the command of the troops. On 4th July, however, Lord Chelmsford was able to redeem his previous misfortunes by a decisive victory at Ulundi, and Sir Garnet's duties became rather those of diplomacy than war. Cetewayo was captured in August, and in October peace was made.

Borthwick was personally concerned with this campaign in two ways. The Stafford House Committee set to work again, and the following letter testifies to his own share in their activity :—

*Sir Garnet Wolseley to A. Borthwick.*

PIETER MARITZBURG, 24 July 1879.

DEAR MR BORTHWICK,—In coming here I passed through Durban, where I had time to visit nearly every ward of the large hospitals established there. I there met your nurses, who are doing first-rate work. The doctor in charge told me that he regarded their arrival as a great blessing, and indeed we ought to feel most grateful to *you* in the first instance and then to the others who followed your leading in the matter for having sent out Doctor Ross and the nurses who came with him.

He then describes the military situation and criticises Lord Chelmsford's strategy in retiring from Ulundi. His sudden retreat had given the impression that he had suffered severely and could not remain ; the chiefs

dared not submit whilst Cetewayo remained at large ; had he been disposed of at once, "the whole business would now be over." He says :—

I am going myself with a brigade to Ulundi, and I hope very soon after my arrival there to make peace on very satisfactory terms, which may, I have every reason to hope, secure Natal immunity from all future danger on the part of the Zulus and protect England from being again dragged into such a dreary and expensive war. Thanking you very much for the great interest you have evinced in the comfort and welfare of the sick and wounded soldiers here, and with kind remembrances to Mrs Borthwick, believe me to be very truly yours,

G. J. WOLSELEY.

The other matter with which Borthwick was personally concerned arose out of a singularly painful incident. The Prince Imperial, fretting no doubt at the forced inaction of his life, and eager to give proof of his manhood, sought, and received, permission to accompany the army as a spectator. He had passed through Woolwich with honours, and had been unofficially attached to the staff at Aldershot ; but he had never actually served in the British Army. His position in South Africa was anomalous. Nobody knew exactly how to treat him—whether as a subordinate officer, or a guest to be favoured. In course of time he found himself attached to Colonel Harrison's column, and on 1st June he was allowed to join a reconnoitring party. They were surprised, surrounded by Zulus, and the Prince was killed. The officer in charge of the party escaped, to incur as odious a reputation as was ever endured by a British officer. It is needless to reopen the case, but in justice to the dead it may be observed that once more the Prince's indefinite position may afford some explanation. The officer appears to have



considered himself under the command of the Prince as a staff officer, rather than being himself responsible for the party and the Prince. It may justly be argued that he ought not to have ridden off until he was sure of his companion's safety. It is said that the Prince, not having very long legs, found it difficult to mount by the stirrup; being a trained athlete he was accustomed to vault into the saddle. On this occasion he would no doubt have done so, had not the pistol holster, which he seized, broken loose. He was thrown back, and his horse galloped off. It may be that he gallantly shouted to his companion to go: the latter may have supposed that he was mounted, and taken this for a command. The case is painful enough, whether we think of it in connection with the Prince's death or as a want of devotion on the part of a British officer; but in the latter respect the gravity of the result should not preclude the possibility that it was a deplorable error of judgment rather than a deliberate act of cowardice.

Borthwick had known the Prince well. The following is an example of their correspondence:—

*The Prince Imperial to A. Borthwick.*

I accept most willingly, my dear sir, the good wishes you have kindly offered me on the recent occasion of my birthday. I knew how my dear father valued your friendship and I can but congratulate myself on finding that I have inherited it. I trust earnestly God will be pleased to accomplish your hopes for the future, and I am, my dear sir, faithfully yours,

NAPOLEON.

What shape these hopes may have taken we cannot say; but one is tempted to think that from one point of view the Prince was not unhappy in the occasion of his

death. It is clear that he was not the man to fritter away his life at Chislehurst. If he nourished an ambition of restoring the dynasty, then his career must have been beset with turbulence and peril, without reason for anticipating a happier ending than had been the lot of his predecessors. At all events he died too soon to know the bitterness of failure, and he died like a soldier. Lady St Helier in her *Memoirs*<sup>1</sup> records that the afflicted household found much consolation in the knowledge that all his wounds were in front. There is further evidence of his gallantry. Later in the summer W. H. Russell wrote Borthwick a long letter. He had gone to Zululand because he "felt he ought to see the British Army in the field ere he died": and he was not pleased with what he saw. The officers were too much inclined to regard soldiering as a "brilliant picnic"; the men he declared by no means satisfied him "on the point of valour and discipline." He admits that "one success would put them all to rights," but at present it was not the army he would like to see. In a gloomy spirit he denounces the annexation of the Transvaal, which, he says, must be deeply resented and lead to mischief; but of the Prince he writes with enthusiasm. Speaking of the official reports which he has seen, he says:—

If any considerations of his fitness for a Napoleonic future could increase the regret which has been felt at his untimely end, the military aptitude, attention to detail, and professional ability evinced in these papers would do so. . . . He was so devoted to his profession that he was regarded amongst insouciant officers as rather a bore than otherwise, for he was always seeking information and instruction.

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<sup>1</sup> *Memories of Fifty Years.*

Borthwick lost no time in promoting the erection of a statue in his honour. His action elicited the following letter:—

*Lord Rosslyn to A. Borthwick.*

*July 13, 1879.*

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—I was so glad last night to have an opportunity of expressing to you my genuine admiration of the pathetic and elegant tributes which have from day to day appeared in the *Morning Post* to the memory of the unfortunate Prince Imperial and to the unutterable sorrow of his illustrious mother. They are models of good taste and correct, though eloquent, writing, and cannot fail to be appreciated both by those for whom they are especially intended and by those critical judges of style who are, I fear, happier in exposing a defect than in praising a success. . . . I send you an impromptu for your own delectation: sincerely yours,

ROSSLYN.<sup>1</sup>

Dead! my one boy—my only one—and dead!

Sirs, do not mock me, say it is not so:

He was the hope of France! Nay—let me go,

I am his mother—Life cannot be fled

From those young eyes and that beloved head

That should have worn a crown:—a crown of woe

Truly I wear for him;—though fallen so low,

An Empress still, dethroned and banished.

I crave your pardon: *now* I cannot weep,

Henceforth I weep for ever. Gone! all gone!

Throne, husband, child, all snatched away from me,

A childless widow prays you, sirs, to keep

Some kind thoughts for her; she is all alone—

Her heart is broken by much misery.

Borthwick was received at Chislehurst, and to his wife he sends a pathetic account of his visits:—

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<sup>1</sup> He adds an expression of alarm at the project of sending the two sons of the Prince of Wales to sea in the same ship: their lives were of too much importance to permit of any risk being run. The Princes sailed in H.M.S. "Bacchante."

. . . . She spoke to me most touching words of my great affection for her son and of my goodness in being the first to initiate a memorial in his honour, of our long friendship, of her regard for yourself and the children. . . . I cried like a child. . . . I bade God bless her and kissed her hands. . . . Zulus say he fought like "a young tiger"; fired three shots with a revolver, then threw it at their heads and fought with sword. . . . I was right when I maintained he fought and died like a hero.

The Memorial Committee was presided over by Lord Sydney, and had the active encouragement and assistance of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh. The Dean of Westminster was asked to grant admission to the Abbey, and he consented. The work was entrusted to Mr Boehm, and all promised well. Unfortunately they had reckoned without the House of Commons. After some questions had been asked, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, on 9th August, raised a debate on the subject. He objected to the proposal on several grounds: the Abbey was intended for the illustrious dead of England, and the Prince was not an Englishman; worse than that, he was a Napoleon, and Sir Wilfrid abhorred the Napoleonic traditions; the Prince had not died fighting for this country; he had only gone to the war in a spirit of "advertisement." Furthermore, we were going to honour the heir of a deposed Sovereign and thereby insult the Government of a friendly Republic. Finally, he objected to the Dean's power to decide in such a case. The circumstances under which he brought forward his motion prevented him from dividing the House, but although the Government showed no disposition to accept his views he was supported by several speeches in the same spirit, and a disagreeable situation had to be faced.

"It really seems," wrote Borthwick to the Dean, "as if, in these days of obstruction and democracy, all honours—even those of the grave—are grudged to Princes. . . . I have seen the French Ambassador this morning, who tells me he has declined to receive a deputation of English objectors: the matter being indifferent to France and purely an English question. He laughed at the idea of its impairing 'the good feeling which happily exists between this country and the Government and people of France.' Neither M. Grévy nor M. Freycinet have said a word to him on the subject."

Borthwick's position was one of peculiar delicacy: it was not easy to explain away the ungraciousness of Parliamentary opposition to one who regarded it from a mother's point of view. More than this; the Committee had to decide whether they should adhere to their proposal at the risk of stirring up further hostility. Their policy was not finally settled until the following year. On 16th July 1880 Mr Briggs, Member for Blackburn, moved a resolution to the effect that the erection of the memorial would be inconsistent with the internal character of the edifice. Mr Gladstone opposed this; but it was carried by 162 votes to 147. The Committee were thus placed in a position of considerable embarrassment; but a solution of their difficulty was found in the permission granted by Queen Victoria to place the monument in St George's Chapel; and they at once informed the Dean that they desired to withdraw their request for a site in Westminster Abbey.

The year 1880 was one of the most eventful in Borthwick's life. The General Election in March and April resulted in a general defeat of the Conservative party; but it brought to him the opportunity of coming out as a candidate.

In February he told his wife that Mr Byass wished

to withdraw from Evesham for private reasons, and had asked him if he would take his place. The prospects were not hopeless, but he realised that it would be "a stiff fight under any circumstances." "I shall not go near Dyke<sup>1</sup> or the Government people," he says, "but go down and see whether I cannot be accepted on my own account. . . . I met Wolff at the Club. 'I think I have a seat for you; I want to see you,' said he. I replied, 'See me quickly, then, for I am making up my mind about another.' 'Oh, then, make up your mind,' quoth he, and off he went. . . . The Liberals are rather down in the mouth and much split among themselves. . . . That leader about Russian intentions against our commerce in to-day's *M.P.* is Salisbury's information."

He went to Evesham and was duly adopted. His father's memory secured him immediate welcome. To his wife he reports: " . . . A Liberal meeting opposite very thin, and over in an hour and a quarter. We lasted twice as long, and I spoke upwards of an hour. They brought out a magnificent silk banner that my mother embroidered, and waved it over me and went mad. . . . There is a perfect Borthwick worship here. The veneration and love of my father's name is intense, and they see him in me. My agent says the only question is the size of the majority . . . but I will not allow myself to be over-sanguine. Whatever comes of it, it is all very amusing, and I really like the work."

Again: "Algernon Rushout came over and says Lord Northwick, who fought the duel with my father, is enthusiastic about me. . . . If only I succeed, with

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. Hart Dyke, the Conservative Whip.



what pleasure shall I look forward to meeting you. All my success will be nothing without your smile."

The Liberals, however, were winning up and down the country, and the tide was not to be stemmed at Evesham: Borthwick was to remain outside Parliament for five years more. But when Lord Beaconsfield resigned he recommended him for a knighthood.

One is often confronted with the allegation that the *Morning Post* was a journal of social intelligence rather than a political force. Had this been so, Borthwick would probably not have received an honour. He had not sat in the House of Commons, so that it could not come as a reward for Parliamentary services. He had done good public work on the Stafford House Committee, and in connection with the Prince Imperial Memorial; but it was to the paper that his life had been devoted, and it was in that connection that he had made his influence felt. The time had not come when titles were to be freely bestowed upon newspaper proprietors, and we may reasonably assume that in Lord Beaconsfield's opinion Borthwick was wielding political power, and that he had not been speaking without warrant when he told his wife that the Prime Minister "looked to him especially." At all events he received public recognition and became Sir Algernon.<sup>1</sup>

Lady Borthwick had spent the winter on the Riviera and was not allowed to risk the trials of an English spring. Consequently the husband's further movements

<sup>1</sup> There is a story that during a dinner given in his honour, and attended by Lord Beaconsfield, Borthwick's new title was made the object of some pleasantry. Lord Beaconsfield is supposed to have said, "Sir Algernon, I congratulate you on having attained a rank which was deemed sufficient honour for Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Isaac Newton and Sir Christopher Wren." This certainly has the Disraelian ring, but there is no certain evidence that this was the occasion of its delivery.

are easily traced in his correspondence. He went much into society. "The Westminster party was huge and brilliant; all your friends and heaps of enquiries. . . . The Duchess of Sutherland sent for me: she wants a book noticed: she loves the *M.P.* . . . I came away at 12.30; met the Prince of Wales and had a chat. . . . Conversation turned upon the House of Commons: several members maintained the debate would last for three days more. I said, 'My reporters tell me the division will take place (to-night) and they are always right.' It does so, and I am right!!!"

Another night he dined in the company of Bernal Osborne, who had some ill-natured things to say about Hughenden; he complained of everything, from the furniture to the conversation, and of having been called upon to assist at the planting of a royal tree, bareheaded: "They put three sovereigns beneath it: of course the gardener had it up again." Finally, he had been sent out driving in a snowstorm; but they did not care for his life: he was a member of the Opposition.

This sentence has a curious significance: "I went to-night to see the electric light at Stafford House: it answered capitally and is sure to succeed some day."

"Went to Lady Airlie's. . . . Lady Feversham there with her daughters, but the mother far and away the loveliest."

As none of these letters are dated it is not easy to preserve the sequence. This one, which shows that Sir Algernon was on friendly terms with Mr Gladstone, appears to belong to the same period, although the wound to which it refers has not been recorded in history: "I met Gladstones at Granville's—fell into their arms. 'How's the head?' said I. 'Look,' said he. 'I

can't see,' said I; 'you are such a giant' (knowing this would please him). 'Stoop down and show,' said she. 'Shall I go on my knees?' quoth he, and he nearly did."

In the summer, Borthwick went abroad. At Wildbad he made the acquaintance of Gortschakoff, the Russian Chancellor, who was then past his eightieth year, and they had many conversations. At the end of his life Lord Glenesk communicated some notes from memory of what then passed. He found the old man "amusing and instructive, though somewhat narrow and rather severe." Borthwick asked about the persecution of the Jews in Russia, and enquired the reason of the extreme prejudice and violent treatment of which they were the victims. The answer was certainly severe: "He stopped to reply, and, dropping his spectacles on to his cheeks, he seemed to look through one with piercing blue eyes, as blue and as powerful as those of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe." Suffice it to say that in the Prince's opinion they suffered no more than they deserved; beyond the fact that they were usurers and oppressors of the people, it was proved beyond doubt that they were in the habit of kidnapping Christian children and bleeding them to death for some purpose connected with their ritual.

"I had always found him so courteous and liberal-minded," he goes on, "so essentially a man of the world, that the last thing I expected was such an outburst as that which I had just witnessed. The great Chancellor was so easy in his conversation and generous in his treatment of the many subjects on which we talked freely, that I was indeed puzzled to explain to myself why he should depart from his usual manner and allow me to see him so upset by the mention of a matter on which it was difficult to establish any conceivable justification for the belief which so profoundly moved him. After a pause

I turned the conversation to India, from which some important news had then arrived, and expressed my anxious hope that between the English and the Russians some real understanding might soon be arrived at on the problem of our relations. He was not behind me in expressing his warm reciprocity of good will, but he urged that his great difficulty about India was that we stood too far off, both in the matter of negotiation but especially in the question of our frontiers. He said, 'We ought to be good friends, but it is indeed difficult until at last we shall come to have a common frontier. When we meet we shall be able to shake hands. The distance of our frontiers makes one side ever jealous of the other, when it sees the other make some advance into what we may call the debatable land or lands to punish some marauder or calm some disturbance. You seek to exact pledges from us where we exact none from you. In the case of Afghanistan, for instance, I cannot see why Russia should ever wish to interfere with that huge country, and my desire is that England should frankly take it under her benevolent protection. Russia would never stand in the way.'

Later on he went to Venice to join Lord De La Warr's yacht "Edeline." They visited Crete and Asia Minor, where Borthwick appeared in a new character: he was a director of the Smyrna-Ephesus Railway. Then they sailed to Constantinople, where he was met by his brother George. The story of the voyage was told by Lady De La Warr in a little book entitled *An Eastern Cruise in the "Edeline."* Borthwick wrote his version to his wife. We may read in his own words his experience and opinion of the late Sultan:—

On Wednesday, Oct. 27th, I went to Arnoutkeni, half-way up the Bosphorus; dressed there and went with M.<sup>1</sup> to Yildiz Kiosk. On arriving at the Palace at 5.30 we stopped at the outer gate and got out of the carriage and walked some forty yards to a side entrance which M. assured me was privileged.

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<sup>1</sup> Musurus Pasha.

It led through a narrow passage past the kitchens and offices, in which many servants appeared to be eating their dinners. On the same level we found a well-furnished room—the Lord Chamberlain's—a tall, thin, dignified old gentleman who was most courteous, and, through M. interpreting, held a pleasant conversation with me. Two gentlemen—Vice C.'s, I suppose—were eating at a round table *à la Turk* with their fingers and extracting fragments of chicken from a savoury mess.

Soon after, we were taken up to Osman Pasha's room on the floor above—a bright handsome room. Muchir Messet, the chief Aide de C., and others came in. I had a long talk about Plevna and the Turkish soldiers with Osman, who is a stout fellow, like an English sergeant of Grenadiers. A band of military music played Italian airs. I was talking to O., looking at the pretty garden, when a V.C. came in in the most empressé manner. It was explained to me we must sit down on the divans. "The Sultan is coming." I was surprised, thinking on the contrary that it would have been right to stand up; but I found we were to sit down for fear we should be seen looking out of window, which is contrary to etiquette. A noise of footsteps was heard on the gravel. It was the Sultan coming from the harem.

I was engaged in conversation when I thought I perceived the Lord High Chamberlain close to a door looking through the keyhole, and it occurred to me that perhaps he was watching the Sultan's passage through the palace, when suddenly he fell prone, and I thought he was looking under the door, until I suddenly perceived that he was engaged in his devotions. We proceeded talking loudly, the more so as wild bursts of the *Traviata* from the band outside made it necessary to speak in an audible voice. By and by Osman left me and suddenly began, in turn, his genuflections and prostrations. Then Messet arrived, and M. and he and I had a long talk. About 6.30 I was sent for and taken through the beautiful central hall of arabesque architecture with thick marble columns and a marble fountain in the centre, and was ushered with Musurus into the presence. M. made ten oriental salutes and I a low bow. The Sultan beckoned me to advance, and holding out his hand shook hands with me very cordially and with a frank smile—as if quite pleased to welcome a friend. He began by



asking after my travels, and how I had left my family, etc., and then thanking me for being such a warm friend of Turkey. The conversation was general, but the Sultan seemed to possess great tact in every expression. I replied that in my support of the Ottoman Empire I felt that I was consulting the best interests of my own Sovereign and my own country, and assured him that many Englishmen shared my opinions and sentiments. After talking for half an hour he dismissed us.

He then gave a very short audience to the Roumanian minister, and a few minutes afterwards, we—the company—left Osman's room for the dining-room—a small room with covers laid for thirteen. The Diplomat was placed on the right of H.M. and I on the left. Next to me was Osman, and then the others—Messet, the Lord High, etc. We stood waiting for a minute. Then H.M. entered, and taking his place motioned to us to be seated. We did not dine thirteen, as Muchir never sat down ; his chair remained empty the whole evening. He had to stand beside the S. and interpret. The service was of silver and the dinner good, but cold from waiting. The Sultan pointed out to me the Turkish dishes when they came and told me he had ordered them expressly for me. They were very dainty. H.M. enquired after the De La Warr's, and told me they had received the pigeons he had sent them and which Lady D. admired. Would they like anything else—had they admired any other things in the gardens? I assured him they had not. We then talked of sport and I asked if he had any grouse, and he described then a bird whose flesh is earth colour ; he had some at no great distance—so I was disappointed of sending him some. He said he was very fond of shooting but had now no time for it. Had I a chiflik or park? I said no. Had Lord D. one? I said yes. Then he would send him some brindled bucks from Broussa, and I should take them. Did I like the music that was being played (now by the private band)? I said it was perfectly exquisite and the musicians most accomplished (quite true). Did Lady B. like music? Yes, indeed, and she composed, and if he would allow me I would send him three songs of hers. H.M. would have the greatest pleasure in accepting them, the more so as he was himself a composer. What did I think of a man who did not like music? I said he must be



incapable of appreciating all beauties of harmony in love or chivalry or all that makes life noblest. H.M., "Yes, such a man will be likely to be a traitor."

Some dish then called his attention, and he said his cook was not good enough for one coming from London and Paris. I assured him that the dinner would be found excellent in either Court; and he insisting that it was not so, I said I did not dare venture to say how good I really thought the cook, lest H.M., whose generosity was so invariably manifested, should make him a present to me. This set him off into a real good laugh, and he expressed his gratification at receiving *une personne aussi sympathique*.

Then we came back to the music—had we any on board? A piano which Lady D. played. But no band? No, the boat was too small. Then more general talk on fruit, flowers, and H.M. rose and left us. We went out into the beautiful hall to coffee and smoke. Muchir brought in a cigarette from the Sultan's own case—which H.M. sent me—and in about a quarter of an hour I was sent for to another audience. H.M. then talked more politics, referring to the present difficulties caused by the great expenditure of the war—for which they had to draw so severely on the resources of the country; his own great anxiety to carry out reforms, and the persistent manner in which political complications hindered him.

. . . I had three special interviews with the Sultan, whom I found very different from what has been represented. He does more work than any man in his dominions . . . frank and simple in manner . . . he is of small stature, but well proportioned. . . . From the first he was at no pains to conceal his grief at the attitude of England. He could not understand how it could advance England's interests to abandon our traditional policy and to join with Russia in destroying what remains of the Ottoman Empire.

One other letter of this year should be noted. Lord Cromer was then Controller-General of Egyptian finances; he was on the point of leaving for India, whence he was to return after an interval of three years to complete the special work of his life. He writes:—

*Feb. 1880.*

The apathy of the English public about Egypt is, I think, much to be regretted. To my mind it is to us the most important branch of the Eastern question. One of the many obstacles in my path here is the great difficulty of getting the public at home to understand what is being done—a difficulty which is increased by the absence from Cairo of newspaper correspondents and by the fact that all official publications are in French. On the whole, things are going fairly well: much better than I expected when I came here. The Khedive is working loyally with us. His ministry, without being much in the way of talent, is by far the best Egypt can turn out. They follow our advice, and I think have learnt that lesson which Constantinople will never learn—that the continued existence of Mahomedan rule depends on the good behaviour of the rulers. . . . All the English and French are working cordially together. The one thing which strangles the country is the principle of internationality. We can't move hand or foot without the consent of fourteen Powers, all pulling different ways and most of them seeking some petty interest of their own. If Egypt is to be put on its legs, it must have an increase of sovereign, *i.e.* legislative, power.

And he gives the advice which Borthwick had asked as to the selection of a local correspondent for the *Morning Post*.

## CHAPTER XIII

1881-1884

ON 21st January 1881 Borthwick wrote to his wife, who was abroad:—

The Queen took four hours before she could be induced to agree to the royal speech because of the retirement from Candahar. The Duchess of Sutherland had Lord Beaconsfield to dine last night, a family party, and a "young man" was to come in—the Prince of Wales: so he did—but the duke also, who was not expected till next week, tumbled in. He had written on Tuesday from Paris for a brougham to meet him, but only arrived with his letter. The Prince chaffed him a great deal, the more so as he made one too many at the small table. Lord Beaconsfield was lively at dinner, but sleepy and tired and old afterwards. The Duchess told him that I had good hopes for the party, but he was very dismal about their prospects. I think on the contrary that a strong reaction will set in very soon. Hartington's speech<sup>1</sup> was excellent and I do not believe that the Radicals will have it all their own way. It is a great pity that Lord Beaconsfield is so old, and this severe weather freezes his shrinking brain; but Lord Salisbury, who is the next head of the party, is young and he will live to be Minister of one of the strongest Governments that England has ever seen. The cruel weakness is in the Lower House men; votes exist, but brains, inception, and power are lacking. There is curious patience and even indifference about political matters. . . . It is a transitory mood and will be succeeded by a strong reaction; but it is singular, and cannot escape notice.

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<sup>1</sup> On the withdrawal from Candahar.

Lord Beaconsfield was in fact dying. His work was done: the flame of life was almost exhausted, and it needed only some rough blast to extinguish it for ever. Before Easter this had come to pass. On 7th April Borthwick wrote to his wife:—

"Monty Corry<sup>1</sup> came back this morning, but the doctors have not allowed him to see Lord B. I think this very foolish." On the 10th: "Monty looked quite aged and is much cut up. He thinks there is no hope and that matters have arrived at the stage when a release is the best thing that can happen. The doctors talk still as if recovery were possible, but Monty and the others do not believe in it." On the 13th: "Wind E.S.E. again, so I suppose Dizzy will die now. He is very Endymionic . . . he says to the doctor 'a magnificent fiasco.' His head wandered when brought into the front room, and he could not make out where he was."

On 19th April Lord Beaconsfield died. "They say Dizzy looked very grand, dead—his face so peaceful and his brow magnificent," Borthwick writes: then in strange juxtaposition: "I am to dine on Saturday to meet Parnell."

He was of course busily occupied with the treatment of the subject in the Press: "The memoir of Dizzy in the *M.P.* was far and away the best of all." It was conveyed to him that the Duke of Albany<sup>2</sup> would attend the funeral on behalf of the Queen; Lord Bridport and Sir Henry Ponsonby would only be there in attendance.

<sup>1</sup> He became Lord Rowton in 1880.

<sup>2</sup> There are several letters from H.R.H. to Sir Algernon of a private character. They are noteworthy as showing that the Duke never spoke of himself as an invalid. There is an entire absence of querulousness, and they are always spirited and cheerful.

"The Queen certainly reads the *M.P.*," is his comment on this.

His next letters contain some interesting reflections on the choice of a new leader. On the 22nd he writes: "I hear Stafford Northcote is to lead. I hope so. Willy [Sir W. Harcourt] tells me of it and that is good authority." In another letter he says: "I think Stafford Northcote is a sort of Sir Robert Peel, clever, and likely to make fewer mistakes than others . . . I avoid saying [what I think] and it is for the party to choose their own man." Lord Cairns he regarded as "only a great advocate, and a Low Church man." His criticism of Lord Salisbury is curious in view of his letter of 21st January. On reflection he appears to have thought that Lord Salisbury's aloofness would prevent him from being sufficiently popular; moreover, he had not yet learnt to trust him implicitly. It may be remembered that in Mr. Gorst's book *The Fourth Party* there is a letter in which Lord Beaconsfield confesses to Sir H. Drummond Wolff that he has some sympathy with political groups which are not entirely respectable: he himself had not always been "respectable." Borthwick had a lurking suspicion that neither of these statesmen was easy to understand or to be trusted without reservation. He had now been concerned with political life for thirty years and he could take long views. Palmerston was always his idol and ideal; he had found no master to take his place. As he had never entertained the same unstinted admiration for Lord Beaconsfield, so now he hesitated to give his unqualified allegiance to Lord Salisbury. He saw no young men clearly destined for leadership (Lord Randolph Churchill was in the proba-

tionary stage) and upon the whole he seems to have thought the best policy was to install a safe man and mark time.

Now came what we may regard as the most critical moment in Borthwick's journalistic career. We have seen in a recent letter that he had appreciated the significance of the advent of a penny Press. In the *Standard* and the *Telegraph* he saw formidable rivals, and he believed that their policy was right. He had complained to Mr Rideout that his representations on the subject had received no attention: now he was in a position to practise what he had preached. But it was a bold resolve to take—rash, some called it; others ruinous. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that all opinion and advice were against him. It was generally felt that if the price of the *Post* were reduced from 3d. to 1d. there would be a loss of prestige. An analogy may be found in the difference which exists between the principal evening papers and some of less responsibility which are sold for a halfpenny. Many people are to be met with now who recall the shock of surprise and pain with which they learnt that the *Post* was to decline from its high estate and be as one of the lower class. That faithful echo of public opinion, *Punch*, gave out a sorrowful remonstrance through the mouth of the redoubtable "Jeames"; the first stanza of his poem ran thus:—

"Sir Halgernon! Sir Halgernon! I can't believe it true,  
They say the *Post's* a penny now, and all along of you;  
The paper that was once the pride of all the swells in town,  
Now like a common print is sold for just a vulgar brown."

Under the circumstances great powers of determination and something more than ordinary courage were



required. The present position was comfortable and assured. The change might justify the risk: but it might be ruin. But there was one, indeed there were two powerful elements at work. Borthwick found encouragement and support where they were most likely to fortify his spirit. Lady Borthwick was convinced of the wisdom of the reduction, even if she was not blind to the danger; and he had an ally in his manager. It will be remembered that Mr Coward had remained on the staff, where his long and honourable service is a matter of common knowledge. Borthwick at this juncture had the benefit of his personal loyalty and professional sagacity.

The correspondence between husband and wife shows very clearly how deeply they were absorbed in the project, and how fully they realised the extent to which the future was at stake. In the early spring Lady Borthwick was seriously ill. Knowing how busy her husband was she concealed from him the gravity of the attack until the worst was over. She confesses that there had been moments when she contemplated the possibility of dying; then she says: "I used to say to myself, 'He will have his penny paper and career and all I have wished for. . . .'"

Again:

I hope and trust the *P.P.* is not giving you trouble: the last letter or two seem as if there were many worries. I do hope and trust it will all be right, but of course, being so weak, I am over-anxious.

Borthwick was sanguine enough. "A good time is dawning, and we should be thankful for it," he had written before this. Thereafter, every letter contains some mention of the *P.P.*:—"We are getting in







*Clock placed on the Morning Post building in 1898*



machinery and preparing for *P.P.* . . . Strange how one shivers on the brink !"

A little later :

All the wisecracs of the Press are against the wisdom of my proceeding : I think, however, I know more than they do. . . .<sup>1</sup> Machines and engines getting on : it seems so slow.

The *P.P.* won't be ready till April-May. It is a great leap up, I hope—but not in a day, I fear. One may have some anxious moments and waitings.

I have had to see important people from Manchester, and shall be all to-morrow and next day making quite a crowd of arrangements about *P.P.* . . . Oh the worry of the *P.P.*—only that I take it easy, it being no use to fash yourself : but ten ball gowns and fittings on are a joke to it. The British workman in every direction. Coward is happy about *M.P.* The great question of cost of paper can only be solved by experience, and seems to open out satisfactorily. The advertisements continue to expand and all promises a healthy life. . . . I am afraid the *M.P.* will give me no holiday. I keep on working from day to day, and never ceasing in anxious responsibility. Every day brings its reward, and I hope that in a short period we shall see the *Post* passing by all others and winning.

Not less eagerly concerned was his sister, who wrote to tell him that there had been a paragraph in the *Bayswater Chronicle* to the effect that the Duke of Sutherland had bought the *M.P.* :—

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<sup>1</sup> "One and all, they advised me against it. One and all, they thought it spelled ruin ; or, if not ruin, a great risk to a valuable, though not great, property, and the certainty of loss. They told me I should inevitably forfeit the support of the classes to whom the *Post* had always appealed, and that I should not gain new subscribers from other classes in numbers sufficient to make good these losses. I should lose not only readers but advertisers, for the advertisers in the *Post* were largely the West End tradespeople who desired to reach their West End patrons. I should lose the political authority which was based on the support of the privileged classes. In short, a penny *Morning Post* was inconceivable and unthinkable from any point of view whatever."—From an article by Mr G. W. Smalley in the *New York Tribune*, Dec. 26, 1909.



I think of the *P.P.* more than I can tell you, and pray for its success. I have a strong feeling that it will succeed. You deserve success more than any man in the whole world, and please God you will have it.

This faithful trust was not doomed to disappointment. The hazardous enterprise was undertaken, and "all the wiseacres of the Press" were confounded. Borthwick's courage was justified, and more than justified. It would be impertinent to pry into the office ledgers or to discuss his private affairs, but he himself never made a secret of the fact that within seven years the circulation of the *Post* rose by leaps and bounds until the revenue had been multiplied tenfold.

Three years later the Borthwicks moved from Eaton Place to Piccadilly, and in 1886 the house on Hampstead Heath was bought. It must have been in a grateful spirit that Sir Algernon wrote:—

I trust that Hampstead will give you health, and I am most happy in thinking that at last you have a house in which you can live in London. After all my professions, the good time has come and the *M.P.* will be able to give you your heart's desire.

The house in Piccadilly, No. 139, has an historic interest: Byron lived in it in his early married days and wrote the *Siege of Corinth* there. It was known then as Piccadilly Terrace. Heath House in time could boast of an artistic association also: Miss Terry once wrote to ask permission to take a few details for a scene at the Lyceum Theatre from the view across the lawn. Both Lord and Lady Glenesk were fond of Hampstead: on Sunday afternoons in the summer the garden was always an agreeable place of assembly. Here is a description of an Easter Monday on the Heath:—

*Sir A. Borthwick to his Wife.*

. . . . We were out all day except for luncheon among the crowds, certainly a most curious study : very good-natured, but squirting water in one's face made them very happy. P—— knows the East End and recognised the ostrich feathers from the club, and pointed out that most of the girls are undersized with black eyes and black hair, and love bright colours—so many Carmens from a Seville tobacco manufactory—very curious. We swallowed much dust. Put pennies in all the slots. . . .

Early in 1882 Borthwick wrote to his wife:—

Dined with Abergavennys : Princess Louise, Salisburys, Stafford Northcote and a large party. Great excitement about the scene in the House.<sup>1</sup> Gladstone met Parliament for a legislative session ; but began by closure, to which fifty amendments and six weeks' prospective discussion. Rushed into a conflict with the other House<sup>2</sup> which necessitates long discussion before closure. Lands in Bradlaugh difficulty, which necessitates discussion before Lords' quarrel and before closure and before legislation, and to-morrow a new row may turn up. It is a mockery of all government and all legislation.

One regular reader and unsparing critic of the *Morning Post* was the venerable Duchess of Cambridge. Her Royal Highness had no idea of interfering in politics, but she held strong opinions and did not hesitate to express them when she saw occasion. She had never been reconciled to the absorption of the kingdom of Hanover in the Prussian monarchy, and did not conceal her disapproval of the Ministers who had either insisted on or consented to the transaction.<sup>3</sup> On one occasion a

<sup>1</sup> Mr Bradlaugh's case.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Donoughmore's motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the working of the Land Act of 1881. It was carried, but the Government declined to have anything to do with it.

<sup>3</sup> It must be remembered that in consequence of the quarrel between the Duke of Cumberland and the German Imperial Government, concerning the succession to the Duchy of Brunswick (1884), the Duke of Cambridge had some presumptive claim to the reversion. As a matter of fact Prince Albrecht of Prussia was elected Regent by the Diet (1885).

paragraph in the *Post* announced that Sir Garnet Wolseley was about to be raised to the peerage in order that he might there explain the scheme of army reform for which he was personally responsible. Borthwick at once received a very forcible intimation that the august lady would like him to remember that her son was at the head of the army and that Sir Garnet was his subordinate officer, acting under his instructions. The message adds that she has neither seen nor had any communication with the Duke on the subject. The Duke of Cambridge was himself a reader of the *Post*, and a guest at Borthwick's house from time to time. The only evidence of his having a grievance against the paper at this time is found in his denunciation of the proposed reform of the Indian army, which the *Post* had blessed. After a quarter of a century we have seen radical reform carried out by a powerful commander-in-chief, not without opposition. At the time of which we are speaking, old traditions were stronger, and innovation was less likely to be welcome. The Duke was proud of the three armies then in existence: "they saved the Empire once before and if need be would do so again," was his conclusion of the whole matter.

Amongst Borthwick's intimate correspondents for many years was Madame Sarah Bernhardt. She had acted in Eaton Place during her first visit to England. She was a frequent visitor in Piccadilly; and she gave her host a bronze inkstand, modelled by herself, representing her own head on the body of a sphinx. There remain letters of friendship and gossip; letters connected with the theatre; letters of introduction. One is a curious appeal for sympathy and support. In 1882 Madame Bernhardt was on tour in England. At Blackpool she

found she had to play the "Dame aux Camélias" "dans un hall plus grand que le Albert Hall. Quinze mille personnes étaient là." There was a promenade; men smoked. The play began, but "le tapage était indéscribable: je fis baisser la toile et je m'en allai. Le public voulait me tuer . . . les journaux de Blackpool fulminent contre moi. . . . Veuillez présenter mes plus belles réverences à Lady Borthwick." If she was to be publicly attacked it was natural that she should turn for refuge to one who was in a position to afford her protection.

During the progress of the war in Egypt, Borthwick received private letters, wholly unconnected with the *Post*. The Hon. Arthur Henniker, then Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards,<sup>1</sup> wrote from Alexandria on 19th August:—

. . . . The men of the 60th and 38th engaged the other day state that at close range the enemy appeared to lose confidence and that they cannot stand the bayonet. There is no doubt, however, that there are some clever rascals with Arabi. All agree here in saying that Arabi is the best of the lot: certainly his permitting the Europeans to leave Cairo within the last few days is a point in his favour. The people of the town speak highly of Beresford as a policeman.<sup>2</sup> I suppose Sir Garnet will attempt to strike a decisive blow at Arabi before high Nile or we may be in for a long job. . . . H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught will make a capital brigadier, and seems to enter into every detail with great interest. I fear the infantry battalions will be short of officers, as 16 subalterns are not enough. No one would know the Brigade of Guards now. This town is a standing disgrace to England. With forethought such as a schoolboy displays, the whole burning, and perhaps the war, might have been avoided. . . . The town is

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<sup>1</sup> Now Major-General.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Charles was in charge of police administration with a naval force, pending the arrival of troops.

a distressing sight . . . 3000 men would have saved it, and 6000<sup>1</sup> I really believe would have finished off Arabi & Co. One cannot be surprised that the Arabs hate us after the way we have allowed this town to be burned. I suppose, however, that Arabi will at the finish of hostilities be invited to London and treated like the Zulu king. One's countrymen are curious people, and soon forget that these people have been and will be the cause of so much suffering to England. . . . The "Decoy,"<sup>2</sup> I fancy, has never received the praise she deserved for the bombardment. They say the way she was worked was beyond all words. Dorrien<sup>3</sup> has been doing well again. He is a very plucky fellow and ought to be given something good. He and Hamilton, R.N.,<sup>4</sup> got well up to the lines the other night and had a very near shave of it.

In explanation of this letter it is only necessary to note that there had been an Arab rising in Alexandria on 11th June, resulting in the murder of four Englishmen. On 11th July the town was bombarded. The prisons were then emptied by the mob, and the escaped convicts, assisted by Arabs, devoted themselves to pillage and incendiarism. Battles were fought on the 24th and 28th (Kassassin). The final defeat of Arabi at Tel el Kebir followed on 13th September. He was not received and fêted in London, but despatched to Ceylon, where the present writer visited him a few years later. It was difficult to recognise in the feeble old gentleman any of the characteristics of a formidable leader of rebellion.

Borthwick meanwhile was suffering from the inevitable disadvantage of not being a supporter of the Government. The office of Patronage Secretary to the Treasury had already been shorn of many of its privileges; but there still existed a list of newspapers to which Govern-

<sup>1</sup> Over 40,000 troops were sent to Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> Gunboat. Lieut. and Com., E. G. Festing.

<sup>3</sup> Lieut. H. F. Smith-Dorrien, R.N.

<sup>4</sup> W. des V. Hamilton; afterwards Rear-admiral; deceased.

ment advertisements were to be sent. Needless to say, this list was practically restricted to such as supported the party in power. This was a matter of principal concern to the smaller provincial papers. To the *Morning Post* it was a more serious matter that important Government communications should be denied it, when early information was being given to other newspapers. Borthwick published an article complaining that the *Post* had been singled out for exclusive treatment, and remonstrated privately with the Prime Minister's Secretary. There was no consolation to be had beyond the assurance that no difference had been made between the *Post* and other papers whose tone was not in harmony with that of the Government. The practice, indeed, was well understood, and not wholly indefensible: but that did not prevent Borthwick from fighting his own battle.

We now come to a question which it is not easy to answer without fear of controversy or contradiction: How far was Lord Glenesk responsible for the foundation of the Primrose League? It will probably be safe to quote the version of this interesting event to be found in Mr Churchill's *Life of Lord Randolph*. It is ample and definite, and has never been disputed.

We must go back a little to the history of the Fourth Party. Lord Randolph had not begun political life as a protégé of the *Morning Post*. In 1877 he had made a speech at Woodstock, in which he laid down such startling principles in connection with the government of Ireland as to win him the distinction of a leading article of remonstrance. Seeing, however, that his own father's comment on this performance was that he must either be mad or have been singularly affected by the



local champagne or claret,<sup>1</sup> this argues no predisposition to enmity on the part of the *Post*.

How soon personal and political sympathy between Borthwick and Lord Randolph began cannot be decided. It is certain that the former was quick to perceive the weight which was rapidly attaching itself to the rising personality. The *Morning Post* was the first paper to report his speeches verbatim; this was early in 1881. It must, however, be borne in mind that Borthwick had a great respect for Sir Stafford Northcote, and that Lord Randolph most decidedly had not.

The story of the Fourth Party need not be repeated in full. Borthwick did not share in their councils. In Mr Gorst's *Fourth Party* there is no indication that they counted upon the *Post* as one of the resources of their campaign, whereas Sir Henry Wolff writes to Lord Randolph<sup>2</sup> that he hears Mr Chenery is well disposed towards them, and that he is eager to secure his support in the *Times*.

The Fourth Party had passed their meridian, but they had not yet sunk to rest, upon 19th April 1883. It was the second anniversary of Lord Beaconsfield's death, and the day was chosen for the unveiling of his statue in Parliament Square.<sup>3</sup> Says Mr Churchill:—

The Fourth Party had grown spontaneously out of the Bradlaugh controversy. The Primrose League sprang from the unveiling of Lord Beaconsfield's statue. Sir Henry Wolff did not attend . . . and he arrived at the House of Commons late in the afternoon. The well-known superin-

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord R. Churchill*, p. 75, in the one-volume edition.

<sup>2</sup> 29th September 1880.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Randolph wrote an emphatic protest against the performance of this ceremony by Sir Stafford Northcote instead of Lord Salisbury. He sent it the *Times*, not to the *Morning Post*.

tendent of the members' cloak-room, Mr Cove, said to him : "You must have a primrose," and gave him one. Thus adorned, Sir Henry entered the Chamber and found the whole Conservative party similarly decorated with Lord Beaconsfield's favourite flower. The fact impressed him vividly and he said to Lord Randolph Churchill as they walked home together, "What a show of primroses! This should be turned to account. Why not start a 'Primrose League'?" Lord Randolph was instantly interested. "Draw up a plan," he said "to carry out your idea and we will see what can be done."

It was not till the autumn, he goes on, that anything was done beyond discussion, or anyone else admitted to their councils. Then they set to work with Sir John Gorst and Sir Alfred Slade. On 17th November these four gentlemen constituted themselves the Ruling Council of the League : "The circle was then gradually increased by the addition of Lord Randolph's closest political allies: Colonel Burnaby, Mr Percy Mitford, Mr Dixon Hartland, and Sir Algernon Borthwick." After describing the ridicule with which the badges and titles were greeted, he says, "the *Morning Post* was their only substantial ally."

Many legends have arisen out of these proceedings. It was long averred that when Queen Victoria sent a wreath of primroses to Lord Beaconsfield's funeral and wrote on it, "His favourite flower," the allusion was to the Prince Consort, not the dead statesman ; and it was pointed out that Lord Beaconsfield was the last man in the world to care about a primrose. One who knew Lord Beaconsfield well, however, declares that he habitually wore a single primrose in his buttonhole when he was at Hughenden in the early spring. He also relates that on one occasion Lord Beaconsfield professed that his favourite amongst his own novels was

*Henrietta Temple*: now anybody who has read the book will remember that it dwells upon the delight of simple cottage life with a fervour which cannot have been feigned. To complete the disproof, if that be necessary, another and more intimate friend can speak of having seen an abundance of primroses in the house in Curzon Street, that had been gathered on the slopes of Windsor Castle. One who knew Sir Henry Wolff well has assured the present writer that she once asked him how the primrose badge came to be adopted, and was answered that it was suggested to him by a young lady at dinner. It is a pleasant imagination, but it is quoted here only to point out how hardly truth is found.

To come now to Lord Glenesk: the writer must be pardoned for becoming egotistical. In January 1899 I was at Cannes and dined one night in a hospitable villa. A lifelong habit of keeping a diary enables me to copy this extract:—" . . . Glenesk, Lady Bathurst, Sir H. and Lady Meysey Thompson, Howard Vincents. . . . Lord G. gave me his account of the founding of the Primrose League. He says that the *Morning Post* first suggested the idea in a leading article and Sir H. D. Wolff fixed it in rules and forms. He says that Dizzy did love primroses and that at his funeral they were there in masses . . . ." and he dispels the "his" theory on unquestionable authority.<sup>1</sup>

In the following autumn I stayed with Lord Glenesk at Glen Muick, and reminded him of this conversation.

<sup>1</sup> At the risk of irrelevance this further entry must be copied. "Meysey Thompson told me a good thing his wife said to Sir C. Rivers Wilson, who was trying to discredit bimetallism to her at dinner. He said, 'Now suppose my knife is gold and my spoon is silver': to which she replied, 'Very well: then eat your dinner with your knife only.' M. T. is an ardent bimetallist."

I have no note of what he told me then, but I distinctly remember his saying that when he came out of his house on Primrose Day some cabmen, who presumably had seen or heard of what was in the *Post*, called his attention to the primroses they wore.

It will be interesting to see what the article said. It appeared on the morning of 19th April 1883, he it remembered.

. . . . The illustrious statesman, who had a quick eye for the beautiful, the simple, and the graceful, loved a wayside flower. . . . It has flourished in such amplitude and beauty this year, and when it was resolved to uncover the statue on the anniversary of the illustrious earl's death, an almost spontaneous suggestion took shape in a resolution to wear as a decoration the statesman's favourite flower. . . . The idea once broached was taken up with enthusiasm. The country has been scoured for primroses, and probably never were so many seen together as will be seen to-day in Parliament Square. It will mark an era—"Primrose Day" will henceforth take a place in our almanacs.<sup>1</sup>

At this distance of time the phrase "spontaneous suggestion" defies analysis and interpretation. Evidently there was a general association of the flower with Lord Beaconsfield's memory. As primroses had notoriously taken a prominent place at his funeral, so they would naturally be put into use again when the season returned and the day was to be celebrated. At all events the article may be claimed as having translated a sentiment into a system, and it certainly added "Primrose Day" to our list of annual observances.

If Sir Henry Wolff deserves the credit of having perceived that the adoption of mediæval titles, such as

<sup>1</sup> To Lady Borthwick he wrote, "The whole world wore primroses to-day. . . . The *M.P.* bade the world wear them, and they were worn accordingly."

knight, dame, and harbinger, and the bestowal of ribbons and badges would prove attractive enough to conquer ridicule, there is little doubt that Borthwick had a large share in the constructive phraseology. He preserved drafts of all the announcements and advertisements which were prepared for the *Post*. On 24th November he published this paragraph:—

We learn that a Tory Society has been formed with the title of the Primrose League. The objects, rules, and other details connected with the operations of the Society are secret, but we believe that we can state generally that its members will be animated by the principles and precepts of Lord Beaconsfield, whose favourite flower has been adopted as the badge, and whose most celebrated expression has been chosen as the motto of an association which may be destined to exercise no inconsiderable influence on political contests throughout the empire.

On 10th December, under the heading "The Primrose Tory League," there was an invitation to gentlemen wishing to join the League to communicate with the registrar. On the 17th there was a leading article which ran thus:—

. . . . Founded under the supervision of leading Conservatives, both in and out of Parliament, it [the League] is intended for co-operation with all other Conservative associations as well as to stimulate individual effort. The objects of the League are the promotion of Tory principles defined as "the maintenance of religion, of the estates of the realm, and of the Imperial ascendancy of Great Britain." The motto of the League is "*Imperium et Libertas*," and it carries primroses on its badge and seal. Thus it adopts the patriotic language and active aspirations of Lord Beaconsfield, for the continuance of which the League is founded. . . . The League specially addresses itself, as did Lord Beaconsfield, to the sympathies of youth . . . (it will give) opportunities for political distinction and social enjoyment. . . . The alliance between the

noble and the worker foreshadowed forty years ago in *Coningsby* and *Sybil* has become an established fact. Of this the Primrose League is the evidence. . . .

On subsequent occasions Lord Glenesk wrote and spoke of the League's origin, but he revealed no secrets. In October 1885 at Norfolk House he said: "It is just two years ago since ten (*sic*) friends assembled together began the formation of the first Habitation of the Primrose League. . . . The origin of the League was in the brain of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff. It was taken up by members of the Fourth Party. . . ." <sup>1</sup>

When, after ten years, the Duchess of Marlborough resigned her position as President of the Ladies' Committee, she wrote to Sir Algernon: "As it was in your house and under your auspices that the Primrose League was started, I write to send you a copy of my letter of resignation." This requires a little explanation. It was never alleged—Sir Algernon never claimed it—that the League was founded in his house; but it was there that the Ladies' Grand Council came into existence. Lord Randolph's diploma was No. 1, Sir Algernon's was No. 37 <sup>2</sup>; but Lady Borthwick's "Diploma of a Dame" was No. 1, and its date was 19th January 1884. It will have been noticed that the advertisement of 10th December was addressed to men only; but it was not concealed from the ingenious founders that to give the movement an animating spirit the zeal of Tory women must be enlisted. Lady Borthwick's claim to have inaugurated this branch of the work is undisputed.

<sup>1</sup> Mention ought to be made of Mr F. D. Thomas, the first registrar, who was a devoted ally of Lord Randolph's and is known to have assisted materially towards the successful launching of the enterprise.

<sup>2</sup> He did not take this out until January 1884. Lord Randolph's was dated 17th November 1883.



Some time later it was decided to make a presentation to Miss Meresia Nevill, who was one of the first, and has remained one of the most indefatigable workers in the cause. Writing to his wife, Sir Algernon reported: "Meresia is to have her diamond star, likewise a watch and chain given to her soon, and it is thought the presentation ought to be made at your house, where she and the rest were born."<sup>1</sup> Another of the earliest enrolled and abidingly loyal Ladies of the League was Lady Hardman, wife of the editor of the *Morning Post*.

Lord Glenesk may truly be said, then, to have been *one* of the founders of the Primrose League, with the additional distinction of having previously encouraged the public to make a primrose demonstration on the anniversary of Lord Beaconsfield's death, and thus, by wearing his chosen flower, to keep his name in sweet remembrance.

It may be permitted to add a sentence in order to point out what amazing results have followed. The League is an unique institution. Only in masonry are such symbols and ornaments preserved and worn with equal gravity and sincerity; and there the rites are secret. The dames and harbingers of the League, few at first in number but fervent in purpose, now cover the land. Their banners and badges and proud titles are familiar as any other village institution, and no one thinks of laughing at them. More than once, indeed, leagues of

<sup>1</sup> In connection with this, the curious fact may be noted that the Primrose legend seems to have had a peculiar charm for the cabmen of London. We have seen that cabmen were the first to call Sir Algernon's attention to their decoration on the first Primrose Day. Miss Nevill relates that once on alighting from a cab, the driver, who seemed to be acquainted with her and her organising and electioneering habits, genially remarked as he took his fare, "I expect you give your Conservative voters more than that."

various kinds have been formed on similar lines, but without far-reaching results; and the enthusiastic labours of Mr George Lane Fox are rewarded by the consciousness that he presides over an organisation more complete and comprehensive than anything the originators could have foreseen; one that has defied alike the assaults of animosity and the flattery of imitation. Let one attestation suffice. Nobody can take Mr Herbert Paul to be a sympathetic witness, yet in his *History of Modern England* he describes the League as "the most permanently successful of all the political organisations that have ever been known in England."

## CHAPTER XIV

1884-1887

IN the summer of 1884 the House of Lords threw out the Franchise Bill and considerable agitation followed. In the winter Parliament met. An exception, at once rare and excellent, was made to the usual rule of political conduct, and a conference took place between the leaders of the two parties. A compromise was effected on the basis of a promise that Reform should immediately be followed by Redistribution, and Bills of both kinds were duly passed into law. Lord Randolph Churchill played a curious part in these proceedings. In December 1883 he had declared himself at Edinburgh as hostile to any measure of reform, not necessarily on principle, but for these four reasons: the time was not convenient, there was grave objection to increasing the Irish vote, the Government were only bent on diverting attention from foreign affairs, there was no general demand for extension of the franchise. Mr Balfour, who was on the platform, at once proclaimed his dissent from these views. Lord Randolph quickly changed his mind. His biographer confesses that in this case his conduct was not consistent or resolute. Lord Randolph himself admitted that in this instance alone his speeches were marked by a "sharp curve." In a published letter,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, Appendix III.

dated 9th June 1884, he stated at length the reasons for his altered mood. He had acted on conviction, he says, but subsequent experience had taught him that the Bill had more public support than he imagined. He therefore recognised the propriety of change and the consequent impropriety of further opposition—"as reasonable and intelligible a change of mind as it could be possible for any M.P. to undergo."

Between the two sessions of 1884 Mr Gladstone made a series of speeches in Midlothian. Recent events had brought Lord Randolph and Sir Algernon into intimate relations, and we are able to learn from the following letter how entirely convinced the writer was of his original blunder. Incidentally one is tempted to speculate upon the state of his mind when he did permit politics to cross it, and did not keep it entirely occupied with fishing.

NEW KELSO LODGE, STRATHCARRON,  
DINGWALL, *Sept. 5, 1884.*

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—I was delighted to hear from you. I thought you had forgotten my existence. . . . I have recruited my waning forces finely here and politics has not crossed my mind, which is occupied with nothing else than fishing. . . . The G.O.M. appears to have been having a fine time of it, and his reception and his manœuvres confirm my opinion that the rejection of the Reform Bill was a blunder too enormous to be described. If it had not been for that fatal act we should have been on velvet. Now I see no issue whatever from our disastrous predicament which can end in anything approaching success. Please present my warmest regards to Lady Borthwick and give my love to your amiable children.—Yours ever,

RANDOLPH S. C.

This opinion must be regarded from the point of view of tactics. Nine months before he had been foremost in preaching hostility to the Government's scheme of

reform. He had long ago perceived that a frontal attack was a mistake, and that in this part of the field to fight was to invite disaster. Hence the "sharp curve" in the line he advocated.

Sympathy existed between the two men, and Lord Randolph was to find a valuable ally in the proprietor of the *Post*: but Borthwick was not disposed to sacrifice his independence to him or anybody else. In the summer the Central Conservative Association issued invitations to the "editors of Conservative newspapers." They were asked to attend a conference in the Carlton Club—the guarded shrine of orthodoxy—and afterwards to meet Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote at a banquet. It was doubtless a laudable intention—the editors from the country would take it as a compliment; counsel and encouragement might be administered, to the benefit alike of hosts and guests. But Borthwick considered it no compliment, and he needed neither assistance nor advice. With a frankness and detachment wholly admirable in one who had every reason for wishing to stand well with the official magnates, he told them plainly that there were representatives of journals, himself amongst them, "not altogether willing to attend at the beck and call of the Conservative Central Office. The scheme," he went on, "is a futile one . . . and will certainly be treated as an instance of 'nobbling' the Press. . . . We of the Press can be of infinite service, but only on condition of absolute freedom from all trammels. We report, narrate, and comment, but have nothing to do with central associations and banquets. . . . A weak journal subsidised is only a mockery of public opinion. . . ."

One curious feature of the entertainment was that the

cards were marked "Private." Borthwick might have pointed out that to invite a company of journalists to meet their political leaders, and at the same time beg them to say nothing about it in their papers, was much the same thing as asking the Fellows of the Royal Society to a revelation of discovery and invention and requesting them to take no notice of anything they saw. Nor was he alone in his objection. One London editor wrote to him, "It is really too d——d silly. One can't even feel angry : it isn't worth it."

This protest against the appearance of nobbling and subsidising was in some sense prophetic. Within a few weeks he was repudiating a definite and formidable charge against his paper on this very ground. The *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister* had recently appeared, and added much to the available store of political knowledge. Readers, however, who choose to refer to the entries of 5th November 1852 and 27th January 1859, will find definite statements to the effect that the *Post* was in the one case being subsidised by Walewski, in the other being "nobbled" by Napoleon III. Borthwick at once wrote to deny these allegations categorically, pointing out that, as he had had entire control of the paper at both dates, he could speak with authority. He admitted that on each occasion the paper was out of accord with Lord Malmesbury's administration of the Foreign Office : in 1852, upon the policy which was risking ill-feeling with France on the question of the numeral III.; in 1859, on the treatment of Italy, where Austria was being told she had as much right as England had in Ireland. He acknowledged at once that he had been in the habit of personal communication with both Emperor and Minister; but, as for subservience to the former, he



pointed out that soon after January 1859 the *Post* was being seized and prohibited in France on account of its strictures upon the Imperial policy at Villafranca. As to receipt of money from Walewski, it would perhaps have been his simplest argument to forward for perusal the correspondence which was passing in 1852 as to the finances of the paper. They should have disproved at once the existence of rich bounties. It was not, perhaps, to be expected that the ex-Minister would admit that he was so strangely and unfortunately mistaken, and Borthwick could do nothing beyond making known his repudiation of the statements<sup>1</sup> and entering his protest. Nor is it necessary now to re-open the controversy in detail; nevertheless, the *Memoirs* are still read and are likely to be read hereafter, and an opportunity must not be lost of recording the contradiction.

Not long after this, another book appeared which gave rise to correspondence with the author: Mr Jennings published his *Croker Papers*. In it there was a letter from Lockhart to Croker concerning the Young England party. It is interesting as showing that Peter Borthwick was a recognised member of this remarkable band of political brothers, but in the first edition he was described as having been a tragic actor at the minor theatres for some time. Lockhart did not know that he had ever published poetry, but declared him to have been a notorious man in the Scotch newspapers in 1822. Borthwick at once wrote to say that in 1822 his father was a boy at school, and that, so far as was known, he had never been connected with the Press until he joined the *Morning Post* in 1849. The rest of his

<sup>1</sup> The correspondence was published in the *Morning Post*, 14th Oct. 1884.

letter throws further light upon the interesting character of Peter :—

"The story of his having been on the stage," says the son, "was one of many election squibs—in this instance founded on the fact of his having played Hamlet and Othello at the Surrey Theatre. My father was a profound Shakesperian scholar as well as an eloquent speaker. I have before me the letters of Messrs Osbaldeston and Davidge, the managers of the Surrey Theatre, written at the time, proving that on these two occasions, when he played as an amateur, he paid for the theatre for his own and his friends' amusement."

Mr Jennings at once accepted this statement, and the sentence was amended in subsequent editions. Lockhart adds a distinction, not wholly enviable, when he couples Borthwick's name with that of Disraeli as the two members of the party whose careers were most likely to be influenced by want of means.

In the year 1885 Sir Algernon succeeded Lord Houghton as President of the Newspaper Press Fund. Throughout his life he took a practical interest in all institutions which had for their aim some benefit to be conferred on the workers of the Press. The Institute of Journalists, the Newsvendors' Benevolent Institution, the Press Club, the Gallery Lodge of Freemasons, all came within his sphere of influence. In connection with the Press Fund his labours were of memorable value. Apart from his personal subscriptions, which were large, he succeeded in raising the membership from 439 to 1956; the income during his presidency was doubled; the capital was increased from £16,000 to £54,000; the amount distributed in annual grants was nearly trebled. In the last year of his life he took the chair as President at the annual meeting, and spoke at the festival dinner, when the Lord Chancellor took the chair. In the same year

he presided at the annual meeting at the Newsvendors' Institution, as he had done twenty-four years before. In fact, he must be given credit for steady work and unflagging zeal on behalf of all ranks in the army of journalism from the editor down to the street-seller.

In the spring of the same year disputes concerning boundary lines in Afghanistan had brought up perilous possibilities of war with Russia. There appears never to have been a time when the impending downfall of England has not been clearly perceived by despondent observers; in studying the variety and confidence of these predictions, reaching back generation beyond generation, we may perhaps find solace and fresh hope in our gloomiest moments. And at this period evil forebodings were not wanting. W. H. Russell was the most robust and courageous of men, but he was not a confirmed optimist.

*W. H. Russell to Sir A. Borthwick.*

*March 24, 1885.*

. . . Whether there be war or not between Russia and what is left of England, there can be no doubt about the excellent coup d'œil of the Muscovite war party in regard to the time selected for picking the quarrel. It is a repetition of the famous denunciation of the Treaty of Paris, Clause 6, by Prince Gortschakoff in 1870, which brought Odo Russell to Versailles to give us a moment's exulting life till the news of Mr Gladstone's disavowal of the bold declaration that "England, with or without allies, would go to war," brought us to our marrow-bones.<sup>1</sup> I speak of the English at German head-quarters. Lord Beaconsfield was right. The sun of our Empire *is* declining. I must say that the descent has been hastened by the departure of our Government from the principles which hitherto guided our policy in dealing with creditors of foreign states and the flagrant outcome of it in the expedition to Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> See *Life of Gladstone*, ii. 353, 354. Mr Gladstone disavowed Mr Odo Russell's language, but admitted that his motive was justifiable.

Sir Algernon, meanwhile, had definitely taken to politics. Before the Redistribution Bill came into operation, he had been prospective candidate for one of the Chelsea constituencies. The General Election was held in November 1885, and on the 29th he received a letter from Lord Cadogan containing this sentence: "The extraordinary results attained by the Conservatives in the five boroughs composing the old borough of Chelsea are, as I well know, due to the admirable manner in which you worked for the cause while you were a candidate before the old constituency. You will now reap the reward in the possession of a safe seat." This prediction was fulfilled. Sir Algernon was returned for South Kensington by a majority of over 2000. In the election of 1886 this was largely increased, and thereafter he was never opposed.

During his first election there was an echo of his controversy with Lord Malmesbury. A supporter wrote to say that during his canvass he had been met with the assertion that the *Morning Post* had been "subsidised by the French Government to assist the Emperor Napoleon at the time that he was shot at in Paris somewhere about the year 1857." The answer was uncompromising. "You may give the lie," he wrote, "to any such slanderous statements as that the *Morning Post* was ever subsidised by the French Government. If any gentleman has any doubt upon the matter I shall be glad to lay before him ample proof which can leave no doubt on his mind."

In writing to congratulate him on his success, Mr Childers observed: "Of our old Owls, I see that Evelyn Ashley has been beaten; and, except yourself and myself, almost everyone is a peer."

During the General Election there was a distinct undercurrent in the direction of a reform of the tariff system. It can hardly be described as a movement, because there was nobody in a position to lead it or force it forward; and even if the volume of opinion was considerable, it was distributed and lacked strength. Perusal of the leading articles of the moment show that the coming events in connection with Ireland were throwing their shadows before them. Even before the Home Rule project presented itself for criticism, there was evident consciousness that the Irish question had not yet been safely and comfortably disposed of. But the Conservatives were chiefly concerned with the threat of what was regarded then as extreme and dangerous democracy, usually identified with Birmingham. "England must be maintained socially free and commercially great," said the *Post* on 23rd November, "or England must fall a victim to the despotic irresponsibility of a few wire-pullers of the new Socialism."

Whenever the *Post* touched upon the reform of the tariff there was no falling away from the principles of 'forty-six. "It is all very well to make long orations to shouting rustics," said the leading article of 27th November, "on the beauty of Mr Cobden's principles and the blessings of one-sided Free Trade, which he never anticipated and probably would have been the first to repudiate." And a few days later comes a taunt, that reads strangely now, against Mr Chamberlain for "harping once more on the sorry string of the immaculate views of Mr Cobden."

The correspondence shows that the Fair Traders turned to the *Post* for sympathy; and in this connection it is

worth noting that for some time past there had been appearing a series of remarkable political letters from Sir Edward Sullivan. They were afterwards published in pamphlet form, and only failed to attract wide attention because their style was too academic to be popular.

Lord Salisbury had taken office in June 1885 when Mr Gladstone resigned, after a hostile vote upon the Budget. The Conservatives had no majority in the House of Commons, and the General Election failed to give them one. The newly enfranchised country voters showed their gratitude by supporting the party which had put them in a position to do so. On 26th January 1886 the Government were beaten on Mr Jesse Collings's amendment to the Address, and Mr Gladstone returned to power subject to the Irish vote. Home Rule was not yet in full blast, although rumours were soon afloat, and the passing issues are indicated by a speech which Borthwick delivered at Kensington Town Hall on 5th March. He dealt at length with the unruliness of Ireland and the Irishmen in Parliament; then he made much of two points—the Government had just shown alarming apathy in face of a resolution against the House of Lords: "Depend upon it, they would have Mr Gladstone destroying the House of Lords before long." If they were not watchful and alert, this blow would be struck suddenly and bring about a revolution. A few communards in Paris had been able to terrorise all Paris; a few Fenians in Ireland were able to demoralise the entire country: the same confusion would follow if a small Radical caucus were allowed to attack at its leisure, and unresisted, the foundations of our Constitution. His other anxiety



arose from the prospect that Mr Gladstone's pusillanimous foreign policy would speedily lay us at the feet of Russia.

Sir Algernon was now fifty-five years old. No man entering the House of Commons at that age can hope for a Parliamentary career. It is not worth while to speculate upon what he might have done had he gone into political life as a young man and devoted his attention to foreign affairs, which at one time was undoubtedly his dream. Had it been convenient for him to begin fifteen years earlier it might not have been too late to aspire to office, and Lady Borthwick's impatience was not without justification. As it was, his position was by no means unenviable. He was not to experience the glory or the bitterness which are the alternative fates of youthful ambition; on the other hand, he was spared the dreary monotony to which members are condemned who have no gifts or graces, and no material advantages. There is a happy medium, and Sir Algernon Borthwick was one of the fortunate men who can take the best out of the House of Commons. He was not troubled with a feverish desire to excel in debate. He was not one of the many victims who have pushed themselves, or been forced by their wives, into Parliament under the delusion, soon to be dispelled, that it involves the enjoyment of social delights. It entailed no excessive tax upon him physically<sup>1</sup> or financially, whereas there are many whom it soon makes bankrupt in health and pocket. He had long occupied a position in public life and in society, and he was from the first what Lord Beaconsfield used to call a

<sup>1</sup> In one letter he writes, "We had an all-night sitting—I stood it perfectly: indeed, it was very amusing."

"personage." He had a safe seat, and that not in a distant or disagreeable part of the country. He had no wish to make speeches on all subjects: consequently when he spoke he spoke with effect. In his private capacity he carried weight that gave a pleasant activity to his occupation. Finally, this—it may not appear to be an exalted view to take of a political equipment, but it is undoubtedly true—that few things soften the asperity of House of Commons existence more effectually than the possession of a capacious house and a hospitable spirit. Upon the whole, Sir Algernon may be said to have gone into Parliament upon very favourable conditions.

Home Rule speedily eclipsed all other issues. In the summer there was another General Election. Chelsea surpassed the successes of the previous autumn, and Sir Charles Dilke was defeated by Mr Whitmore: Sir Algernon's majority in South Kensington was larger than before. Lord Salisbury this time had his majority and came, as the phrase is, not only into office but into power.

Lord Randolph, who had been Secretary of State for India in 1885, became Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons. It is difficult to look back without pain at this time of triumph. He had risen rapidly and unaided to eminence. Short only of being Prime Minister, he was the most powerful and the most popular member of the Government. He seemed to hold all the good cards in the pack: yet he was on the point of throwing down his hand. Fortune was to turn against him; he was to have no second chance; and at the age when he should have been in full fruition of his works, his days were to be numbered.

Meanwhile he was on the crest of the wave, and his buoyant spirits are revealed in this letter:—

*Lord R. Churchill to Sir A. Borthwick.*

TREASURY CHAMBERS, WHITEHALL,  
Sept. 24, 1886

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—I am very grateful to you for your kind note and greatly value the approval of one who, like yourself, has had such great experience in watching, criticising, and judging the actions of those who take part in public life.

The party is a splendid one; such materials Dizzy never had to work with. With luck, constitutional principles ought now to hold their own for many years. Your friend the Sultan is playing the fool marvellously.—Yours ever,

RANDOLPH S. C.

At Christmas Lord Randolph resigned. The letter which announced his decision, and which has been the subject of much comment, appeared in the *Times*; but it was in the *Morning Post* that he found his confidential friend. He had, indeed, been heard in the pomp of power to speak of the *Post* as "my paper." That was a figure of speech not unpardonable in a man who had reached his goal and was rejoicing in all privileges that appertain to very high political office; but Borthwick was indeed his friend. There is no evidence that he ever attempted to interfere with Lord Randolph's actions: in his private letters he expresses no opinions. He does indeed tell his wife that the Duchess of Marlborough felt sure she could have "squared matters" if she had been told what was going on; Lord Salisbury had assured her that her son was so nice and so easy to get on with, giving her no warning of the blow which was about to fall more heavily perhaps on her than anyone else. One knows how at such a time the air is full of stories which speedily grow out of all recognition,

and it must be noted that Borthwick was only repeating what he had heard ; he made no accusation against the Prime Minister and no comment on the lost opportunity postulated by what had been said. But that he remained in sympathy and in touch with Lord Randolph is manifest. After the rupture had been made absolute, after Mr Goschen had filled the vacant place, after reconciliation had ceased to be within reasonable expectation, the *Post* still persisted in urging reunion. And of direct communication there is this evidence: when Lord Randolph resigned, he set forth his reasons in his letter to Lord Salisbury. Here and afterwards, in his statement in Parliament, he based his reasons principally upon questions of economy. On 1st January 1887, however, he wrote a letter to the chief Conservative Whip in which he added a general condemnation of the policy into which the party was drifting—a policy of "do-nothing and obstruction." He foresaw that this must quickly produce a reaction and prepare for disaster at the next General Election: consequently he resigned as a protest. Now this letter was not published at the time ; but on 6th January the *Morning Post* had on the contents' poster, "Lord Randolph Churchill's letter to Mr Akers-Douglas," and, without giving the full text, it made known the existence of the letter and its purport.

But Borthwick was not blind to facts. In another letter to his wife he mentioned Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, who was then out of Parliament and had been sent on a mission to Egypt. Writing thence, Sir Henry had inquired why all the papers were abusing him, and suggested the source of hostility. Borthwick observed : "I tell him this is nonsense. The papers regard him as

a creation of R., and R. being down, so are all his allies. We shall stick to Egypt," he adds with foresight.

Yet he was not so acute a partisan as to be unjust. Mr Smith was leading the House as Lord Randolph's successor, and Borthwick readily admitted that he was doing well. Of Mr Balfour, whose star was rising as that of his old ally was in descent, he entertained a less favourable opinion.

Melancholy, indeed, is the contrast between Lord Randolph's position in September 1886 and in September 1887. We have seen how he wrote in the former month—a reply, as it might have been, to a supporter paying compliments. A year later he is the fallen Minister acknowledging his indebtedness for friendly attention.

2 CONNAUGHT PLACE,  
Sept. 11, 1887.

MY DEAR B.,—I do not like to go to you this afternoon. The footman here has developed diphtheria. . . . I have not been near the man, and only arrived in the morning yesterday; but I remember the children at Heath House, so think it better to keep out of their way. I am much disappointed, as the afternoon is so fine and would have been most pleasant at Hampstead.—Yours sincerely,

RANDOLPH S. C.

There is something forlorn in the loneliness which this implies, but something pleasant in the consideration for other people of which it gives evidence.

Borthwick meanwhile had been chosen chairman of the section of the party composed of the Metropolitan Unionist members, and this gave him responsibility. When a number of these gentlemen showed a disposition to oppose the Government, the Minister concerned wrote to express his sincere hope that "You may find yourself able to bring a little pressure to bear upon some

of your flock." And there is satisfactory evidence that his political work in London had been of recognised importance. One of his colleagues wrote to say that he had been representing to the Whip that some notice should be taken of their body when honours were to be distributed, and that he had urged Borthwick's claims. No doubt he was grateful for the compliment, but he need not have felt himself under an exclusive sense of obligation to the writer when at the Jubilee of 1887 he was promoted to the rank of a baronet.



## CHAPTER XV

1887-1892

DURING his first two sessions Borthwick contented himself with short interventions in Parliamentary proceedings upon subjects that interested him, such as the proper care of water-colour pictures in the public galleries and provisions for ensuring safety in theatres; but in 1888 he achieved a distinction which is denied to most members after years of vain endeavour. Limitation of time makes it impossible for more than a very few private members to get their Bills discussed, and priority depends entirely on the fortunes of the ballot. The measure which Sir Algernon was able to bring in and to pass had for its object the amendment of the law of libel. It was introduced on 10th February, and passed its first and second reading without debate. Even so, it was not entirely unopposed. Any one member can block a Bill by objecting unless it is the allotted business of the day, and at some juncture its easy progress appears to have been threatened by the habitual obstructors. The following genial note, dated Wednesday, reveals one of the most fiery members of a militant body in his gentler moments:—

DEAR SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK,—I regret extremely having opposed the Bill you are promoting last night. I did so by inadvertence. However, you may rest assured I shall not do so again, and, moreover, will try to stop Mr Biggar. — Believe me, very truly,

CHARLES K. D. TANNER.

On 6th June the Committee stage was reached and Mr Kelly moved an amendment which he admitted would wreck the Bill, if it were carried; and Sir Algernon had to fight. Associated with him in its introduction were Sir Albert Rollit, Mr H. Lawson, Mr Jennings, Mr Donald Cameron, and Mr John Morley, but upon Borthwick devolved the responsibility of accepting or refusing amendments; he was in charge. Mr Kelly's complaint was that it was an attempt to secure improper immunity for newspaper proprietors from the consequence of their indiscretions. The answer was that nothing was asked beyond protection from vexatious and frivolous prosecution, and immunity in the case of *bona fide* reports of public meetings. Instances were given of repeated actions brought by persons with pretended grievances: they had invariably failed, but they imposed upon the newspapers excessive vexation and expense. The only plea advanced for proprietors was a safeguard against imprisonment on technical grounds for an offence committed without their knowledge or consent. The present Lord Chancellor<sup>1</sup> supported the amendment; the present Lord Chief Justice,<sup>2</sup> then Attorney-General, opposed it, and it was rejected. The Bill passed through Committee with amendments, and was read a third time on 3rd August. In the House of Lords it was further amended, but no insuperable difficulties arose, and at the end of the autumn session Sir Algernon had the satisfaction of seeing his own legislative proposal pass into law.

His connection with Kensington required him to take a prominent part in the erection of a Jubilee Memorial to Queen Victoria, and he was appointed to serve on a

<sup>1</sup> Lord Loreburn.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Alverstone.

sub-committee which included the two leading members of the Royal Academy, who were also residents in the borough, Sir Frederick Leighton and Sir John Millais. For reasons which need not now be examined their labours were abortive. Sir Algernon was appointed chairman, but he came to the conclusion that the general committee had better please themselves, and he decided to call no further meetings. Letters from the two artists show that they were in cordial agreement, and the courtly President adds a graceful compliment to "our courteous chairman."

Borthwick's diaries of engagements show that he was occupied without intermission and in a great variety of ways. In 1883 he had joined the Board of Management of the Chelsea Hospital for Women. It may be recorded here that eleven years later he became chairman at a time of difficulty and bad omen. His correspondence is sufficient proof that he devoted much time and labour to these responsible duties. At a later date a colleague on the Board wrote offering his "humble testimony to the splendid way in which you have stuck to the institution and actually *saved* it." After his death a letter from the secretary was published bearing corroboration to this: "With unfaltering determination and unfailing judgment he guided it through all its difficulties and helped to put it in a position to carry on the splendid work that it has since accomplished." He became President of the Hospital in 1905.

Throughout his life he made much use of clubs. He was specially fond of the Garrick Club, and took his turn to serve on the committee. In fact, here it was that his friends saw him most at his ease. Here he could smoke and talk in the lighter vein of the

*Owl* days, when he had been a less conspicuous figure in the world, and more the master of his time and movements. Here it was that he made his facetious comment on the difference which had arisen between the proprietor and editor of an evening paper, to the concern of political society and the admirers and friends of both parties: "De Custibus non est disputandum," said Sir Algernon. In connection with this it may be noted here that Sir Algernon was endowed with an ample sense of humour. On one occasion a gentleman came to the House of Commons to ask him to preside at a dinner in support of a certain enterprise. It was represented that his presence would be of great service, and an honorarium of £500 was suggested. Sir Algernon protested that this was a meagre offer; and the figure rose to £1000. Sir Algernon said he must think it over, and would give his answer next day. The gentleman called again and was told that he should have his chairman if the pounds were made guineas; and the bargain was struck. Sir Algernon attended the dinner and duly received his cheque for a thousand guineas—which he handed over to the Newspaper Press Fund.

Seldom a day now that had not its public engagement; here are a few taken at random from consecutive entries: "Committee Newspaper Soc., 2.30; Institute of Journalists, 3; P. L. General Purposes Committee, 3; Committee Leprosy Fund, 4; Deputation Chelsea Teachers, 5; Imperial Federation League Committee, 11.30; Soc. Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 3; National Union, 7; Charity Organisation, 7; Chelsea Hospital Foundation Stone, 4.30." And with these a stream of private engagements ranging from an august

dinner-party to a cotillon—the latter noted as carefully as any.

This observation induces one to pause and consider what were Sir Algernon's private occupations at this time. During the years now under review, 1887–1892, he rented Invercauld on Deeside from Mr Farquharson; there he spent much time and dispensed much hospitality. Some idea of the place may be gathered from the diary of the Shah of Persia, who paid him a visit in 1889 and permitted his impressions to be reported.

On 18th July Sir Algernon wrote to Lady Borthwick: "We are very busy preparing. . . . Macneill wrote the Persians would be 17; Wolff telegraphs they will be 24. The Shah is to stalk; he won't have a drive." This is his Majesty's account:—<sup>1</sup>

Accompanied by the Prince of Wales's son we left Mr Mackenzie's house and drove towards Invercauld. On the way we saw a very pretty girl. On reaching Balmoral we met many men and women who had come out to see us. Balmoral is the summer quarters of her Majesty. . . . We continued our journey. . . . The country was very beautiful all round. On reaching Invercauld, Sir Algernon Borthwick, our host, the tenant of this place, received us at the gate, while numbers of ladies and gentlemen met us near the house, which is a very fine structure and has an extensive park and a nice green lawn, surrounded by wooded hills which render it a beautiful aspect. We saw here the same kind of yellow flower that we saw in Tehran in April last. It proves that there must be a difference of three months in the temperature.

Our host is a Member of Parliament of the Conservative party, and the proprietor of the *Morning Post* newspaper. This house and property belong to Farquharson, who is a

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<sup>1</sup> Translated.

young man now and has recently become an officer in the Prince of Wales's own regiment.<sup>1</sup> In the afternoon we walked in the park. The house is very strongly built. We saw a cave-like place under this building in which there were loopholes. We were told that this place was built a thousand years ago, when the inhabitants were still uncivilised. Even as late as 150 years ago the Scots were leading a nomadic life. The names of the clans yet remain good. Their chiefs were called Lords of the Clans, alike Ilkhani of Kashkai or of Shadelvo tribes. They lived in tents, and changed their encampment from one place to another. The proprietor of this place is one of the oldest families in Scotland and owns forty square miles of land around. Some additions have been done to this house, such as the room in which we dined last night was 200 years back built of wood with a low dark ceiling.

After dinner, accompanied by the Prince, we went up to the drawing-room. Some Scotchmen were playing pipes and dancing round the torchlight on the lawn. We then went down where a tent was pitched, the centre of which was boarded where ladies and gentlemen used to dance. It was a splendid ball. There was a very pretty girl among the party, who wore glasses. She lives at Braemar.

*Sunday.*—There is nothing to be done on Sundays, and Sabbath is strictly observed here. After lunch we drove to Braemar and Mar Lodge. The latter belongs to the Earl of Fife, who intends to marry the Prince of Wales's daughter.

Invercauld consists of three structures. The one which is now in ruins had been built a thousand years back. Next to that has been built 200 years ago. The conspiracy which Prince Charles Edward held against the present dynasty was conducted in the room where we dined in this building. The third addition is 150 years old.

Amin es Sultan sent us a book with a request from Lady Borthwick to write our name and to draw something as a remembrance of our visit. We drew a grouse, a bird peculiar

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Farquharson was in the 10th Hussars. The Shah took care to be informed in minute detail.



to Scotland. We had an excellent dinner that evening.<sup>1</sup> After dinner the Prince told us that our host wished to present us with a stone. We went up to a large room, and Sir Algernon presented us with a fine violet-coloured crystal. We then talked a little with the Prince and retired to our room.

Lady Borthwick was not of the party, which consisted entirely of men, but his Majesty, besides the picture of a grouse and some very gracious messages, sent her a magnificent ring to mark his satisfaction with the visit.

I am permitted to quote the following extract from the diary of Sir W. H. Russell:—

*Dec. 7 (1889).*—Borthwick met me at Euston. Birmingham 6.30. Grand Hotel.

*Dec. 8.*—Borthwick as nice and attentive as could be. Most amusing stories anent Shah of Persia at Invercauld. Left by 12.20. B. insisted on paying bill, cabs, etc., all to himself. London 4.50. B. drove me in his brougham to Carlisle Mansions.

Sir Algernon himself was very fond of stalking. A record of the season of 1890 shows that in spite of his sixty years he was as active as any of his guests. Of the forty stags killed, the heaviest fell to Sir Charles Hall—17 st. 12 lbs., nine points; Sir Algernon came next with one of 17 st. 2 lbs., ten points: these were among the fifteen heads reserved to be stuffed. Oliver, who was then seventeen, killed three stags. Amongst others who killed one or more were the late Lord Lathom, the late Capt. Hon. Maurice Bourke, R.N., the late Sir Edward Hulse, the late Lord Cheylesmore, Mr Henry Chaplin,

<sup>1</sup> This was probably the occasion on which the following dialogue took place. The Shah having exclaimed, "Cuisinier—excellent!" his host, in the right spirit of the East, courteously declared, "Majesté, mon cuisinier est à vous."

"Non," replied the Shah peremptorily; "homme donne pas homme. En Perse, Liberté, Constitution."

Admiral Sir Alfred Paget, Mr Gerald Paget, Sir Cosmo Duff Gordon, Colonel Ernest Villiers, Mr Newton Ogle, Colonel Ivor Maxse, and Mr R. H. Benson. On 1st October there was a deer drive: his late Majesty killed four stags; Prince Henry of Battenberg, four; Admiral Sir Henry Stephenson, three; Sir Algernon, one.

Fishing had no less attraction for him, and his letters give repeated evidence of the pleasure he found in it. A note of Lady Bathurst's belonging to this period gives a pleasant description of amiable rivalry between father and daughter:—

"The following is, as near as I can remember," she writes, "an account of my greatest day's sport on the Dee at Invercauld. It was a very hot, still day; the water was low and clear, and we thought we should be lucky if we caught one or two fish at most. My father fished the left bank and I and my gillie rowed across to the right bank. I was to begin at the lower Keppick, a still, deep pool, and here I fished from a sandbank. As fish were likely to require much tempting on such a day, my gillie, contrary to his custom, put on his favourite fly at once, the 'Blue Charm.' At my second cast, Grant, who was standing above me on the bank, called to me that he saw a fish after my hook, so I drew it gently through the water with a little jerky movement, trying to imitate a minnow. Just as I was about to cast again, I felt that delicious tightening of the line which brings a throb to the angler's heart: I had hooked my prize. He played well, disturbing the still pool with his wild efforts to free himself; but in about three minutes I landed him, a nice eight-pounder. I thought we should then go to another pool as we had disturbed this one, but Grant said, 'You may as well try another cast.' I did: and great was my surprise to feel a tug—and behold, I had another one on. To make a long story short, I landed five salmon out of that one pool as fast as they could be caught—all between  $6\frac{1}{2}$  and 13 pounds. They are not often heavier in the spring in the Invercauld water,

although my father caught a sixteen-pounder. I then went to the Soldier's pool, where I caught two: then the Doctor's pool, where I caught one, and to the upper Killoch, where I caught one. The remaining four I caught in the lower Killoch. By six o'clock my arms were so tired that I could fish no longer, so Grant took the rod and hooked another three which I landed, making a total of fifteen. They were all caught on a 15-foot split cane rod which I fear will never see another such day's sport. I only used two flies—the 'Blue Charm' and 'Silver Grey.' My father had not had quite such luck and only caught ten: still, twenty-five salmon to two rods is a very satisfactory day's fishing."

The father had his revenge a few days later when he killed twenty-five fish.

It may easily be imagined that in the midst of these occupations Sir Algernon was unable to exercise a minute supervision over the routine work of the *Post*. Presumably he knew what a gillie was as well as most men: certainly he was familiar with the appearance of Queen Victoria's Highland servants. Nevertheless it came to pass that her Majesty was described in the *Post* as being attended on a public occasion by a couple of gillies, and there is something amusing in the remonstrance which reached him, from one careful for accuracy, in which he was reminded that a gillie neither wore the costume nor discharged duties suitable and appertaining to a royal household, whereas the Highlanders in their full dress always attended her Majesty in the capacity of upper servants. No doubt Sir Algernon, fishing on the Dee, knew this as well as his informant; probably he was philosophical enough to reflect that even Homer nods, and that not even the most vigilant sub-editor can protect a paper from the risk of a reporter's technical error.

Indeed, Sir Algernon had every opportunity of acquainting himself with the nature of the Queen's household. Our Royal family have always made a kindly practice of associating with their neighbours; on Deeside the Borthwick family lived in constant and friendly intercourse with those who came and went at Balmoral, and from none amongst these did they receive more kindness and attention than from Queen Victoria herself. "Our dinner was most successful," writes Sir Algernon to Lady Borthwick. "H.M. was full of enquiries after you . . . most kind to Liliast<sup>1</sup> had a long talk with each of us." Again:—

Rode to Balmoral. L., O.<sup>2</sup> and I wrote names. Met Fleetwood Edwardes, always charming. Likewise Prince Henry, who said they were just coming to see us, so they gave us thirty minutes' start to boil the pot. He and the Princess came to tea. . . . They brought a perfectly lovely present to Liliast—a parasol of which Princess Beatrice has designed the handle. . . . Our ride did us and the ponies good.

Not long after this Sir Algernon was shooting with another member of the Royal family. In 1893 the Duke of Edinburgh became Duke of Saxe-Coburg, and in his new home Sir Algernon was his guest. His letters show no symptom of diminished energy.

"I have killed chamois," he wrote to Lady Borthwick, "and am now on the red deer. I have just killed what they call here an 18-pointer because he has 9 points on one antler, but he has 6 on the other, so Scotch way he is a 15-pointer, which is more than Imperial. I shot him in the chest at 140 yards—which and details for Oliver when I get home. Nothing could exceed the Duke's kindness. I have a wonderful story for the Queen and you of a shot of the Duke's and of

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<sup>1</sup> Lady Bathurst.

<sup>2</sup> Liliast and Oliver.

the romance of getting a chamois from a sheer precipice of 600 feet where it had stuck, and the climb and his descent. Wonderful! The keepers are delightful, and the scenery so novel: the whole thing weird and strange. To-morrow I am up at 4.30 for an early stalk. . . ."

And here is his description of a storm:—

"The forked lightning seemed to hit the hills. The thunder crashed with a sharp rent as if tearing some huge rock asunder, and then rolled off big and sonorous, dying in a thousand deep notes amongst the caverns of the mountain's side."

From this digression we return to public life. Lord Randolph Churchill was in adversity. The Report of the Parnell Commission was brought before Parliament on 3rd March 1890. Lord Randolph had been opposed to the policy of the Government in this matter from the first. The story of his dissent and subsequent action must be read in the *Life*; it is only pertinent here as illustrating his continued intimacy with the editor of the *Post*. On March 11 there was a debate in the House of Commons. Lord Randolph had intended to support the amendment of Mr Jennings, who was regarded as his intimate political friend, condemning the management of the proceedings against Mr Parnell. Instead of doing this, he anticipated Mr Jennings and attacked the Government with extraordinary fierceness and in language designedly startling. He was evidently alone: no response came from his own side. At one moment he paused for a glass of water. This simple aid is usually administered by the nearest neighbour, but no one moved. Presently a member, less resentful than the rest, fetched a tumbler from the lobby. "I hope this will not compromise you with the party," was Lord Randolph's dramatic recognition. In due time Mr

Jennings rose. He frankly admitted that he had, according to common knowledge, counted on Lord Randolph's support ; now, in order to dissociate himself from an attempt to "stab his party in the back," he asked leave to withdraw his motion.

Nor was this all. A few days later Lord Randolph was engaged to speak for Lord Brooke at Colchester ; the meeting was abruptly abandoned owing to the member's unnamed "illness." The chairman of the Paddington Association resigned, and the clubs throughout the constituency passed resolutions of censure. So did the Midland Conservative Club at his political Mecca, Birmingham. The Conservative Press combined to condemn him, and he would have been utterly friendless and abandoned, save that amongst the faithless, faithful only was the *Morning Post*, "which," says Mr Churchill, "almost alone among metropolitan newspapers remained well disposed towards him."

That Lord Randolph appreciated this fidelity is made clear by the following letter :—

2 CONNAUGHT PLACE,  
March 14, 1890.

DEAR B.,—I have obtained from W. H. Smith the memorandum against the Special Commission which I wrote in 1888. It is, I think, a document which might be of some interest to the public. Would you like the *Morning Post* to have it? If so, I will send it to no other paper. Let me know to-morrow morning, if you like to take it, to whom and where and at what time on Sunday I am to send it. I shall write a short letter to the *M.P.* explaining that I publish it as an answer to the accusation of disloyalty to the party and of stabbing the Govt. in the back.—Yours ever,

RANDOLPH S. C.

And it was published accordingly. It is no part of our business here to discuss Lord Randolph's conduct,



but it is only fair to observe that the phrase "stabbing in the back," which signifies cowardice and treachery, is certainly inappropriate. He had given the Government a prodigious kick; but he was under no obligation to refrain from such action if the spirit moved him, and that the spirit was likely to move him in that direction must have been obvious to any member of the Government who had perused his memorandum.

To Sir Algernon it must have been a pleasant change of ideas to turn to a communication from Henry Irving which reached him at the same time:—

*Henry Irving to Sir A. Borthwick.*

LYCEUM THEATRE,  
Feb. 13, 1890.

MY DEAR SIR ALGERNON,—I beg your acceptance here with of a complete set of the volumes of Shakespeare which poor Frank Marshall edited, and in the production of which I took some little part.

I hope you will like it and be inclined perhaps to think it worthy of some notice as a complete work. As I have no interest in it—except a purely non-business one—I think I may say that I think it one of the best editions of the poet yet given to the world.—Believe me, my dear Sir Algernon, sincerely yours,

HY. IRVING.

A letter in still lighter vein from another distinguished friend outside politics belongs to 1892, but it may be placed here:—

*F. C. Burnand to Sir A. Borthwick.*

. . . . *Punch* is not out till Wednesday. One speaks of him "coming out" as a maiden of sweet eighteen. You keep well and go strong, I hope. Seldom see I thee now. Remember me and my new address when your double barrel brings down the noble stag, "then, my buck, remember *me*," and note change of address, but never change of sentiments

(I didn't vote against you !<sup>1</sup> nor for you ; so kept the balance—which is more than I can do at my bankers—but no matter) towards you from yours very truly, F. C. BURNAND.

The next one shows that the famous war correspondent was also a lively letter-writer in times of peace :—

*W. H. Russell to Sir A. Borthwick.*

NAPLES, May 22nd, 1892.

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—We have been feeding on lotus (sometimes with macaroni) in this delightful asylum for the last three weeks, and it is with extreme reluctance that I leave it in a day or two. "Dea haec nobis otia fecit." . . . We settled down here on April 30 on arriving from Egypt. Oh, dolce far niente, ideal of Buddha, how I love you ! But not so much as my wife does ! We are most admirably suited to each other. Up the Nile day after day we sat on deck whilst our fellow passengers, smothered in dust and bathed in perspiration, were flying over the desert in the midst of a crowd of howling savages in pursuit of an unintelligent dragoman to some inscrutable monument or ruin, and never felt in the least unhappy. Nor did I try to inspire my helpmate with any desire to leave me by describing the familiar temples, and as I couldn't and she wouldn't ride donkeys, horses, or camels, and I was lame and she was lazy, we remained in masterly and mistressly inactivity. I left England saddened to the heart by the news of Prince Eddie's death on the 14th of January, which came as we sailed in P. and O. *Clyde*; and on returning to Cairo I was cast down by the intelligence of the death of Harman,<sup>2</sup> one of my oldest, best and dearest of friends. . . . Life is very insecure [in Egypt]: there were more than 300 murders in Lower Egypt last year, and the police are a complete failure in the country districts. Grenfell was a tower of strength to the English name, but nothing will ever be safe in Egypt proper till Dongola at least is occupied as an advanced post for the reconquest of the Soudan. I see you have been doing

<sup>1</sup> This was written after the General Election.

<sup>2</sup> Col. King Harman, M.P.

good work for the Press, and if there is or was gratitude in the body, which I doubt, you should receive some testimonial of the sense entertained as it must be by the best journalists of your immense service. The General Election will be one of the most consequential ever held in England, I take it, and whatever party comes in there must be a succession of changes and conflicts involving an immense disturbance of the Parliamentary elements before the questions in solution settle down in definite shapes. What these blessed Italians are about I can't conceive. They are hammering away in all their dockyards, firing great guns at targets from all their forts on the coast, and drilling and practising their infantry, poor little things, as if they expected a war to-morrow. They are shouting for big fleets and armies and shouting shame when asked to pay for them. I shall post this letter in Rome, whither we go presently. I tell my wife Circe lives just round the corner of Cape Misenum "at the end of our street," and that we are or will be under the spell of her enchantments if we do not fly without delay. Give my very best regards to Lady Borthwick. I wonder if the daughter of the house holds the broken-down angler in her memory,—or the son? If so, commend me. . . . We have had Algy Lennoxes, Waterfords, Iveaghs, and yachts to match here lately.—Ever yours most sincerely,

W. H. RUSSELL.

## CHAPTER XVI

1892-1895

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK had been in Parliament nearly seven years when he had to face a third election. The House of Commons which had been returned in 1886 had covered as much of the span allotted by the Septennial Act as is usually considered decent and proper. Perhaps the most notable product of these years had been the stability of the Unionist coalition. This real and, as it was to prove, enduring alliance of inveterate opponents undoubtedly surprised most politicians. Mr Gladstone's followers counted on a return of the prodigals: Conservatives, remembering the Round Table Conference,<sup>1</sup> were for a long time suspicious, and feared that issues other than that of Home Rule would sever the new connection. Lord Beaconsfield, whose political instinct was not often at fault, had laid it down that England does not love a coalition. In the present application of this principle, Lord Randolph Churchill had confessed in the House of Commons, soon after his resignation, that he had regarded the Liberal Unionists as a crutch, to be discarded as soon as they had served their purpose. Nobody else, however, wanted to discard them, and they had not felt compelled to break away; and so it

<sup>1</sup> In 1887.

came to pass that Lord Beaconsfield was shown for once to be a fallible prophet, and Lord Randolph a shortsighted politician. In fact, the fusion has become in course of years so thorough that it is not easy to-day to explain the respective natures and relative functions of Conservative and Liberal-Unionist associations to persons who are not versed in the political history of the last quarter of a century.

At the time, indeed, the Liberal-Unionists had not served their purpose. It was inevitable that the election must be fought principally on the Irish question, and that if Mr Gladstone were returned to office, another Home Rule Bill would have to be dealt with.

A perusal of the leading articles in the *Morning Post* during the month of July 1892 shows that this was so; they are a series of treatises against Mr Gladstone's Irish policy. The reasons which had called the Liberal-Unionist party into existence were, therefore, as imperative as before, and its members were naturally conscious of their value and jealous of their corporate status. The following letter shows what vigilant guardians they had in their leaders:—

*Sir Henry James to Sir A. Borthwick.*

SHOREHAM PLACE, SEVENOAKS,  
July 20, 1892.

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—It is a very small matter, but I wish you would tell your editor that he is making a mistake in classing Mr Kenny, who won a seat in Dublin City, as a Conservative. He is a Liberal-Unionist: our numbers are 46, whilst through this mistake the *M.P.* makes us 45.

What a mess the Gladstonians will be in! I hope you are not going to leave us.—Yours,

HENRY JAMES.

One might be pardoned a moment's astonishment at what appears to be a suggestion of Borthwick transferring his allegiance to the other party. A glance at the current numbers of the *Post* would at once dispel such an illusion. The truth is that rumour was already giving Sir Algernon a peerage, and the writer was only expressing a hope that he was not going to lose the company of his friend in the House of Commons.

There was, however, as there had been during the elections of 1885, a decided undercurrent of what is now called Tariff Reform. In the month of May, Lord Salisbury, speaking at Hastings, had let fall some remarks which were taken as a confession that he had Protectionist inclinations, and an agitation was revived which lasted with more or less spirit for a year. At the General Election the Liberal party turned this to good effect, and the familiar cry of the little loaf was heard throughout the land. The *Morning Post* remained firm. To this the present writer can bear personal testimony; for, having joined in a correspondence in the paper with some modest observations of a Free Trade complexion, he received immediate and severe castigation. The *Post* at no time accepted the principles of Free Trade—we have seen what it preached as lately as 1885,—but it stood high and dry. The time had not yet come for the turning of the ocean, and the current was not deep or strong enough to recast the surface of the waters.

On 24th September 1892 the *Times* summed up a prolonged controversy in a leading article which concluded with these emphatic words: Peel was quoted as having said that the best way to com-



pete with hostile tariffs was to encourage free imports ; and then—

If we are to fight the battle of free trade over again, these words and these arguments will once more do noble service in the cause of right reason and national prosperity, and we cannot give our new protectionists a better piece of advice than to ponder them patiently and refute them if they can.

Very different was the language of the *Post*. They opened their pages once more to Sir Edward Sullivan, who wrote some elaborate diatribes against the principles and policy of Cobdenism. In due course Lord Salisbury made a speech in answer to those who had criticised his remarks at Hastings. The *Post* did not go so far as to quarrel with his explanations, but it was made evident on which side the paper meant to stand :—

Lord Salisbury's views on fiscal policy have been largely misrepresented, and on Saturday he assured a Liverpool audience that he was no advocate of a duty on corn. Reciprocity does not in his view involve protection. It implies simply the recognition of the fact that a war of tariffs is being waged on all sides from which the greatest trading country in the world cannot hope to be permanently absent. . . . The imposition of hostile tariffs doubtless seems impossible to men who have been rigidly brought up in the school of Cobden. Nevertheless, nothing is to be gained by dismissing the matter as a protective heresy, a phrase which too often represents the mere impatience of economists who will neither forget nor learn.<sup>1</sup>

The result of the General Election was to extinguish the Unionist majority and to give one of 42 to Mr Gladstone. He himself was returned again in Midlothian, but his majority fell from 4600 to 690. This reduction was largely due to the popularity of his opponent, Colonel Wauchope, whose death eight years

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post*, 6th February 1893.

later in South Africa was one of the most tragic events of the war. Another reason assigned was the uncompromising answer which he had had the courage to deliver on the eve of the election to a deputation that came to him upon the eight-hours question, after having received a sympathetic response from Lord Salisbury. His declarations upon the subject of Disestablishment had further shocked a large number of his supporters, and it was said that many went weeping to vote against their idol under the compulsion of their religious principles.

The situation to be faced in Parliament may be gathered from the two following letters:—

*H. Labouchere to Sir A. Borthwick.*

*July 17.*

DEAR BORTHWICK,—Is Salisbury going to resign or not? I should say that it is sound policy to resign. If he does not, he must meet Parliament with a Queen's Speech, to which we shall simply reply that we have no confidence. If he resigns, we must make the Queen's Speech. This, however, does not trouble me. What does, is whether I shall be able to go to Marienbad. If you know what is likely to happen, do tell me. We hear all sorts of conflicting reports.—Yours truly,

H. LABOUCHERE.

*July 19.*

Our revered Leader is in the Highlands and we are getting rather sulky at his absence. We are beginning to think the H. of L. would be good for him. If he is not prepared to recognise that the Radicals are the masters of the situation, his Government will not last long. But why I say that Lord S. would save trouble by resigning is that we shall meet a Queen's Speech by a declaration that he has not the confidence of the country and that we have a mandate to inform him of this. Unless he deems the revered one a perfect lunatic, he can hardly suppose that we shall debate the speech or say what we want to do. No. Count noses is precisely what we mean to

do. If this confidence question is settled to the advantage of Lord S., then—and not until then—will we discuss the speech on its merits. The division ought to be before dinner. The Irish are all right (both sections), consequently we have no fear of result. I do not myself see why the new Govt. should meet Parliament before next year. Our trouble is that our G.O.M. has with age lost his self-reliance and his grim determination in forcing his views on his lieutenants. The Cabinet will therefore be too Whiggish and will prove a trouble to him.—  
Yours truly, H. LABOUCHERE.

*P.S.*—We hear that you are to be made a Peer and that Ritchie<sup>1</sup> is to have your seat.

Mr Labouchere's forecast was right. Lord Salisbury met Parliament at once, and Mr Asquith established his place amongst the front rank in the House of Commons by the speech which he delivered in moving a vote of want of confidence. The Government were beaten by 40, and resigned. Mr Gladstone became Prime Minister for the fourth time, and Mr Asquith began his official life as Home Secretary.

Mr Labouchere was also right in foreseeing that the new Cabinet would be too Whiggish to suit his tastes, and he was soon writing to Sir Algernon on a personal matter. The letters that were exchanged were not those of political opponents so much as of men who had known each other long, had been engaged in the same profession, and were in the habit of discussing public affairs in their broadest aspect. His own position was peculiar. The story of what passed between him and Mr Gladstone was duly narrated in *Truth* at the time, and no good purpose can be served by repeating it in detail. On 18th August he wrote a full account of all that had passed to Sir Algernon; he wished the facts

<sup>1</sup> Mr Ritchie had been defeated in the Tower Hamlets.

to be known, and he was anxious that the *Post* should be correctly informed.

Mr Gladstone had realised that Mr Labouchere was entitled to expect an invitation to join the Cabinet; but he also realised that this could not be given without possible embarrassment to himself. He therefore proposed through Mr Bertram Currie that a letter should be written to him in which Mr Labouchere was to say that he had no desire for office and thought he could do better work below the gangway. Mr Labouchere was quite shrewd enough to see that his position in a Whiggish Cabinet would be uncomfortable and constrained; he was also shrewd enough to see that such a voluntary statement would undermine his position and restrict his freedom of action. He would prefer the option of declining a definite proposal in the usual manner, and he was anxious that the circumstances should be known to the public.

Sir Algernon was in some perplexity. He was unwilling to disoblige a friend, and no doubt from a journalistic point of view the information was valuable; but he was on delicate ground, and it was not his habit to sacrifice discretion to effect.

"I hope we shall do each other many good turns in and out of Parliament," he wrote from York on 18th August. "In this matter I wish I could have seen you to have a talk, but I am on the road north. Your letter reached me here: my best writer is at Carlsbad, and the editor just on the wing, while I am out of touch with London. The papers are two days old on Deeside, and a letter or article takes as long to reach, and in a delicate matter like this one ought to say exactly the right thing. . . . I have always believed that Mr G. would hang up Home Rule and like to rely on *our* votes against Irish and Radicals. His treatment of you is to me a proof of this. Anything to grasp power and anything to keep it."

Neither of these experts had diagnosed the symptoms quite accurately. In spite of Mr Labouchere's assurance that the Radicals were masters of the situation, Mr Gladstone did contrive to get on with his business in company with his Whiggish colleagues. His overtures to the Radical element had not been fortunate, and he wisely attempted no more. Mr Labouchere stood on velvet: his position had been recognised; he had a good ostensible grievance, which is always a useful asset; and his hands were quite free. Yet the Cabinet survived.

Sir Algernon, for his part, under-estimated the strength of the Prime Minister's enthusiasm; he attributed to him too much strategical instinct and not enough of the Crusader's temperament. We know now that, right or wrong, Mr Gladstone had convinced himself of the justice and sanctity of Home Rule, and that he was devoted to the fulfilment of his project.

There was to be calm before the storm, and the autumn was a time of truce. Early in the new year the lists were set, and Sir Algernon reported to his wife:—

*Sir A. Borthwick to Lady Borthwick.*

*March 10, 1893.*

. . . . The Cadogan dinner was very pleasant: he put me next himself and Lord Londonderry next me. Also I had a pleasant Scotch chat with Fife. Glen Muick is in the market for sale . . . . it is not really a nice place . . . . I have paired for to-night and all to-morrow, and I shall go to Dover and return on Sunday to dine with the Prince of Wales at Marlborough House. . . . The great event was the meeting at the Carlton,<sup>1</sup> when Randolph was called for

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<sup>1</sup> A meeting of the party was held at the Carlton Club when Parliament met.

four times by the party and at last rose from an obscure corner and professed his allegiance to his old friend and leader, Arthur Balfour, amid an uproar of enthusiasm. He did not say one word of Lord S., although he was in the chair. He is working steadily and well. . . . Gladstone is to go to look at our house at Hampstead on Sunday and take refuge with the cats if the crowds annoy him on the Heath.

The figure of Lord Randolph crosses the scene again, no longer silent and aloof, but not less pitiable on that account. He had seen in all its fulness and uncompromising clarity the failure of his aspirations. He had played his great coup and he had lost. It need not have been too late to begin again and retrieve his fortunes: he was a comparatively young man; he had genius, and he had never wanted courage. His pride, it is true, must submit to a little chastening; but he could count on being met half-way in his overtures of reconciliation. He need not have despaired, had there not been lurking the fearful knowledge that all his efforts must be vain. He hastened to make what amends might be whilst yet there was time; but time was against him, and he knew it. It is not easy to conceive anything more sorrowful than the anguish of his mind when he perceived, in spite of his fierce endeavours, that his physical powers were failing; that the tongue would no longer obey the brain; that he could never recover the lost ground; that nothing remained for him now but the dreadful reflections, "too late," and "it might have been." For the moment, however, he was once more amongst the party leaders. He was received back into the fold at the Carlton; he was recognised as a protagonist of Opposition in the street.



*W. H. Russell to Sir A. Borthwick,*

*Whitmonday, 1893.*

. . . I hope you and the fair disciple of Isaac Walton (who never caught a salmon in his life) are enjoying good sport, as you must be revelling in this glorious weather. I was in the crowd yesterday,<sup>1</sup> very much against my will, and saw Randolph, as pale as a ghost, but quite calm in manner, in Pall Mall, when he was making his way to the Carlton Club under a storm of "bohs" and groans, and I certainly did not feel at all as he seems to have done on the occasion.

Lord Randolph will appear no more in these pages. When he died, two years later, Sir Algernon received a letter from the mother who had loved him so intensely, which is not for the public to read. One extract, however, may be permitted, because it serves as a summary of the relation between the two men: "He was truly and deeply attached to you, and you were very good to him."

Sir Algernon had led a busy and eventful life, but not even his varied experiences could afford any justification for the following paragraph which appeared about this time in an Italian paper:—

In October 1892 Admiral Sir Algernon Borthwick, having completed his sixty fifth year, was compulsorily retired from the service, and, by way of protest, straightway joined a merchant ship as A.B. Having served a year before the mast, he obtained from his captain a certificate to the effect that Borthwick, A.B., had performed all tasks allotted to him with youthful vigour, and had, moreover, distinguished himself by his general handiness, his intelligence, and strict attention to discipline. The gallant old tar forwarded this certificate a week or two ago to the Admiralty, along with an inquiry whether, on the strength of it, he might be allowed to join

<sup>1</sup> There had been a demonstration in Hyde Park in favour of the Local Veto Bill.

the Navy as a volunteer?—and my Lords promptly fined him five shillings! It is satisfactory to know, as showing there was no ill-feeling, that the fine was cheerfully paid.

He was, in fact, spending his time far more comfortably, as the next letter proves.

On 21st May Lord Roberts wrote to ask for a correct list of the guests at "your interesting and, in some respects, remarkable dinner on the 12th instant. I should like to make a note of what proved to me a most agreeable evening. I was only sorry to hear of the terrible accident which happened to you the other day. I rejoice to think that you yourself were not injured."

The dinner in question, which was given at the *Amphitryon*, was composed of the following: the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, as they then were; Lord Roberts, Mr Chamberlain, Lord Randolph Churchill, Lord James of Hereford, Sir William Harcourt, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Mr Balfour, Mr Astor, Sir Edward Carson, M. Jean de Reszke, Sir Charles Hall, Sir W. H. Russell, and Captain Seymour Fortescue. The accident referred to was serious. Lord Glenesk's horses ran away; the coachman was thrown from the box and killed; he himself was fortunate enough to escape unhurt.

During the year 1893 there were two important domestic changes. The tenancy at Invercauld had expired, and for this autumn Queen Victoria was gracious enough to lend Birkhall as a stop-gap in anticipation of removal to Glen Muick. This sign of favour was naturally gratifying; moreover, it enabled Sir Algernon to enjoy his favourite refuge in the midst of a most arduous session. Parliament had met in January. The Home Rule Bill had been introduced

at once and passed in August : in September the Lords threw it out ; but the work of the session was by no means ended. There was an adjournment for six weeks ; then the Houses met again and sat until March 1894, when the prorogation was at once followed by the opening of another session.

The return of the family from Birkhall was followed by the marriage of the only daughter to Lord Bathurst.<sup>1</sup> One pleasant feature of the wedding was that not only did his supporters in Kensington give the bride a handsome present, but the Liberals, as a token of good feeling and regard for her father, sent a bracelet and brooch of turquoises and diamonds. It was an alliance which might have satisfied the most anxious and devoted parent, and the contemplation of it continued to the end of Lord Glenesk's life to be what Mr Gladstone once described as "dear to a father's heart."

Oliver Borthwick had now passed through Eton and Oxford, and was ready to begin life. His prospects were enviable ; he had no occasion to suffer the disadvantages under which his father and grandfather had laboured ; his position in the world was assured : it rested with himself to turn his opportunities to good account.

In many ways he was to be considered peculiarly qualified for a diplomatic career. As a child he had been much abroad : he had grown up acquainted, if not familiar, with men and women of other nations ; his ideas were not narrow nor were his prejudices insular. Foreign languages had for him no terrors ; and he was essentially a man of the world. He had originality and courage, a marked personality, and the bright spirit

<sup>1</sup> Seymour Henry, seventh Earl.

which is most profitable in social intercourse. But he was a born editor. Through his mother he may have inherited some of that instinct for politics, and that capacity for affairs, which have always been associated with the name of Villiers; but in the natural flow of his inclination he was a true son of Peter and Algernon. In the letters which passed between Lord and Lady Glenesk there are no records of precocious sagacity or any tendency to say smart things. It is of the daughter that all the facetious stories are told. It is Oliver's delicate health rather than his intellectual promise that occupies the parents' attention. But the father reveals his tenderness by adding as an after-thought to one letter, "He is such a dear boy."

Oliver had written an important leader for the *Post* whilst he was still at Balliol. He was reading Greek, and had paid a visit with his tutor to Athens. Soon after his return there was a crisis in Greek affairs: nobody at the *Morning Post* office knew what to think or to say, and a telegram was sent to Oxford asking Oliver if he could explain the situation. An article was sent, and was at once approved; and he had made a successful début.

He formally joined the staff in 1894. Mr Moore, the editor, died in January 1895, and Oliver filled the vacancy until the appointment of Mr Locker in May.<sup>1</sup> Thenceforward he was the power behind the throne, even if he did not sit on it.

On 30th April Sir Algernon wrote to Lady Borthwick: "The editor, new, begins to-morrow. O. will coach him for a time. I only hope he will do his work half as well.

<sup>1</sup> Mr Locker retired in 1897. Mr J. N. Dunn was editor from 1897 until 1905, when he was succeeded by Mr Fabian Ware.

Oliver will still superintend, but will not be chained to the oar." He perceived that he could lay down his arms and hand over his command without compunction, and it followed that at the age of twenty-two Oliver found himself controlling the influence and the power for good or ill which belong to an established London paper.

He was not impetuous enough to repudiate guidance or underrate the value of experience. He avoided the mistake, often made by young men, of assuming that their elders' views are antiquated and their advice a hindrance. For example, coming out of a theatre one night with the present writer, he paused to consider whether he should go home and see his father before turning to his night's work at the office. But if he was not presumptuous he was entirely self-reliant. He believed in the *Post*, and he believed in himself. Those who sit in editors' chairs and address millions with the oracular "we," are of all men most liable to become didactic. If they be not timid and conventional, it can hardly be otherwise. Nothing kindles one's sense of importance so much as the possession of some startling piece of news, and nothing tends more to excite a masterful spirit than the habit of instructing mankind without fear of contradiction. It is all the more to the credit of so young a man, promoted to so responsible a post, that he should have preserved any measure of modesty and restraint.

He had, no doubt, his enthusiasms and predilections, those warm impulses without which youth is deformed and young men become prigs: his judgments must inevitably have needed revision, and his sense of proportion readjustment; but his imagination never ran riot, and he had reason to show for every opinion he









*The Hon. Oliver Borthwick*



held. The early extinction of so much promise and such opportunities was lamentable indeed.

It is never wise for a layman to hazard an opinion on a medical subject, and to say that a man has shortened his life by hard work is to invite contradiction; but one is tempted to assert that by habitually turning night into day and by devoting all his time, all his energy, and all his thoughts to the service of the paper, Oliver Borthwick went far towards undermining a constitution not originally robust, and rendering it susceptible to attack; and it is a melancholy reflection that if Lord Glenesk owed all his fortune and prosperity to the *Morning Post*, he had to charge against it the lives of his father and his son.

In three instances Oliver has left traces visible to all the world, beyond such influences as he may have permanently impressed upon the paper during his control. He developed and perfected the paginal index for each day's issue. As far back as 1869 the *Times* had printed a daily list of contents above the leading article, and before 1894 references to pages had been added. Oliver amplified this, although there were considerable difficulties to be overcome, with the result that a good index is now as essential to a well-edited paper as to a well-edited book. It was due to Oliver's energy and enterprise that the imposing office in the Strand was built. He was determined that the paper should have every advantage that modern science can afford; he therefore paid a visit to America, where he diligently examined the newest devices connected with printing machinery, and he improved the occasion by securing an introduction to President Roosevelt, whose manner of receiving him was particularly flattering. Finally, it was largely due

to Oliver that the Embankment Home, familiar to all readers of the *Morning Post*, was established on so satisfactory and enduring a basis.

From the first he flung himself with enthusiasm into his work and was not afraid of responsibility. To his sister he wrote continually, and with a loving and open-hearted confidence which gives his letters a peculiar and, in retrospect, a mournful interest. In September 1894 his account of his stalking at Glen Muick is accompanied by some repining. He is wanted at home, but he feels that he ought to be in Fleet Street. "I wanted to go away and relieve Peacock,<sup>1</sup> and let him have a holiday," he says. ". . . I wrote and offered it, but he refused and said he would take his holiday at the beginning of next year." Towards the end of the year he writes from the office: "It is half-past three in the morning and I have just finished my work. Poor Moore has been unable to come here the last two nights, and so I have *edited* the paper instead. Do you see many mistakes in consequence?" Again in the following August: "Both Peacock and the editor have been away, and so, except for about five or six hours' sleep and time for my meals, I have been working all day and all night. I am more than overjoyed at the result. . . . The baby's birth<sup>2</sup> was the first bit of news given to me on taking over the editorship on Sunday night." And some time later: "I have been so worried and so full of work. . . . I have really been rushed off my legs and off my head. You will be thinking that I might keep a printed form to announce these woes, as they seem to be chronic."

<sup>1</sup> Mr E. E. Peacock, Manager of the *Morning Post*.

<sup>2</sup> Lady Bathurst's son and heir, Allen, Lord Apsley.

But there is never a complaint of feeling ill. Whether he was unaware of the strain to which he was subjecting himself, or whether he was unwilling to recognise his limitations, cannot now be known. It was so far evident, however, that he had need to cherish his health that he was presently sent to St Moritz to escape a London winter. From here his letters reveal the thoughtful and emotional side of his character.<sup>1</sup>

A clever woman the other day, talking of friendships, said with great truth that the greater the friendship the more time you wanted for your confidences : by this I mean that if you meet a *great* friend for an hour you have nothing to say to one another, because you have so much ; while if you meet a *friend* for an hour you can talk incessantly. I came across such a charming thing in Shakespeare the other day—

"Love all, trust a few,

Do wrong to none ; be able for thine enemy

Rather in power than use ; and keep thy friend

Under thy own life's key."<sup>2</sup>

And he makes a habit of copying out and sending passages in poetry which appeal to him.

But he was before all things a man of action. He had great ideas, and his business was to urge them on his fellow-countrymen. Nor was he denied occasion. He began work at a time of flux and change ; he was soon to be involved in the rush and strain of a great crisis.

On 3rd March 1894 Mr Gladstone resigned and Lord Rosebery became Prime Minister. The administration will not be numbered in history amongst the most successful. According to gossip it suffered from internal troubles, and Sir William Harcourt was not credited

<sup>1</sup> He had a great love of music : in days when he took scarcely any holidays he would contrive to pay a visit to Bayreuth.

<sup>2</sup> *All's Well that Ends Well*, i. 1.



with a soothing influence ; but the following report from Sir Algernon to Lady Borthwick should at least acquit him of the charge of being a deliberate wrecker : " The Speakership is giving great trouble. I back Ridley.<sup>1</sup> I had a talk with Willie just now, who is in high spirits at not being turned out yet—' never expected to survive the first fortnight,' but now hopes to live on. I doubt it. They are terribly weak, and Rosebery very seedy—a sort of type of the party." The letter goes on to retail a number of domestic events which were exciting society at the time, and ends with some severe strictures on the plays then running : "*Rebellious Susan* is the one pretty comedy. My dinner I shall have 63 at on Wednesday, and the following about 25. Primrose Day is the 26th April this year, and Balfour comes. Query : Shall I ask the delegates to a swarry ? "

Lord Rosebery's Government was not destined to enjoy a long life. Perhaps its way of passing was more remarkable than any of its achievements. One summer's day Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, the Secretary of State for War, began proceedings by announcing that the Duke of Cambridge was about to retire from the command of the army, which he had held for thirty-nine years. It was no secret that the proposal had not come spontaneously from the Duke. For administrative purposes the necessity had been presented to him, and like a loyal gentleman and servant of the Crown he had accepted it. Before the day's work was done, the Minister had practically accepted his own dismissal. Mr Brodrick had carried a hostile motion against the Government in army estimates, and the administration

<sup>1</sup> Sir Matthew White Ridley was the Unionist candidate, but Mr Gully was elected.

was at an end. To Sir Algernon this brought a material change. He had the satisfaction of being returned unopposed in South Kensington, and of joining the victorious army which Lord Salisbury was once more called upon to lead: but he was no longer to serve in the House of Commons. The peerage which gossip had given him in 1892 now became a reality, and after forty-five years of active public life he was to reach the destination which Englishmen have always been taught to regard as the goal of legitimate and laudable ambition. It is worth observing that in communicating to him her Majesty's pleasure, Lord Salisbury offers his congratulations "to one who had rendered such long and valuable services to the Conservative party, and to whose exertions its present prosperity is so largely due": but he makes no allusion to the *Morning Post* and the Press.

The choice of a title revived old memories and associations. Borthwick had long been in use. As far back as 1877 Sir Algernon had made inquiries about the property called Glencross which had once belonged to his family, apparently with a view to purchase. Nothing more, however, was heard of this. He now set his heart upon Glencorse, which had family associations, and he hoped the matter was settled. The lordship of the manor, however, presented a difficulty. The present owner, being away from home, was not at once apprised. As soon as he heard what was contemplated, he objected, as he was fully entitled to do. There were other appropriate names at hand, and Sir Algernon thought of Pentland and Glengelt; Glengelt, he explained to his wife, was an old Border possession of the Borthwick family in Berwickshire: its only fault was

that it was "rather hard with its two g's"; but in each case there was a similar obstacle.

Finally he solved the difficulty by adopting Glenesk, as the designation of the stream running through Glencorse, and he instructed his lawyers to buy a small property adjoining. This infringed no man's rights, and it identified him with the territorial connection of which he had never been forgetful. The incident may seem to be of no great importance to those who have no taste for heraldry; but it has a personal significance in so far as it emphasises again his genealogy and the cherished traditions of his Scottish ancestry.

Amongst the letters of congratulation which came, there was this from the uncle of ninety-three:—

*Right Hon. C. P. Villiers to Lady Glenesk.*

50 CADOGAN PLACE,  
21 October 1895.

MY DEAR ALICE,—I have been so completely laid up, or rather knocked down, during the last week or two by the effects of this most unseasonable and detestable weather, with which we have been and are still afflicted, that I have been obliged to postpone all the duties the performance of which depends upon the use of pen, ink, and paper; but the wind and the weather having changed somewhat to-day for the better, I will ask you on my part to congratulate your husband upon the acknowledgment that he has just received for the long and consistent and able service that he has rendered for so many years to his party, and which, upon his having accepted, I hope will prove equally agreeable and satisfactory to yourself. The report of this compliment being intended for him was for some time in circulation, but I only heard myself of its confirmation on the highest authority from an old friend of your husband's, Sir — Wolff (our Minister now at Madrid), whom I met by some accident last week and who on the occasion reminded me of the last time we had met and had

then discussed the character and prospects of your husband (just 25 years ago), when we were both agreed (and both afterwards right) on the subject. I hope you, by means of the clearer air in Scotland, are escaping the cold and damp fogs with which we are afflicted (certainly in Chelsea), and I have no doubt without a chance of being relieved of the same in the next month, when they are properly due.

I see that Mr Gladstone has lately almost promised not again to interfere in public affairs, but that I fear will not save us from some of the lamentable consequences of his former disastrous policy. Remembering me kindly to Lord G.,—I am,  
yours affectly.,

C. P. VILLIERS.

## CHAPTER XVII

1895-1898

LORD GLENESK had sat for ten years in the House of Commons with the unusually large proportion of four general elections. Looking back twenty years one remembers his presence distinctly. He took Parliamentary life sedately. He never appeared to be bored ; he was certainly never in a hurry. He never drooped, as some members do, despairing of occupation ; he never bustled about like others, with an ostentatious display of papers. He would cross the lobby with a slow and measured pace, rather reflective, as if he had heard something worth thinking about, or was thinking of something worth other people's hearing. He was in the happy position of having better sources of information than gossip can afford. He had the intelligence department of the *Post* at his command and could test the value of Press news : he was on friendly terms with men of all classes and both parties. He could afford to look rather wise, because he knew a good deal that was not known to all his fellow-members. He was not an old member in point of service, but he had grown up amongst the great Parliamentary traditions, and he undoubtedly revered what Mr Speaker Peel once called "the majesty of this assembly." On the other

hand, he was old enough in years to claim the indulgence yielded to the veterans, and he was not unduly pressed by the Whips. Upon the whole one may regard his experience of the House of Commons as ideally pleasant from the point of view of one who has no intention of seeking the furious delight of battle.

He was not lucky enough to get precedence a second time for a private Bill, but it must by no means be inferred that he was idle. The Chairmanship of the Committee of Metropolitan Members gave him constant scope for activity; moreover, a man who has anything to do with organisation and is, by the nature of his position, at all behind the scenes, has always something to think about or to work for. Nor did he in the House of Lords seek immediate repose. Soon after he had taken his seat in 1896 the Lord Chancellor brought in a Bill which aimed at the suppression of indecent evidence in law reports, and Lord Glenesk at once took up the defence of the Press. It was, he declared, as bad a piece of legislation as could possibly be introduced. Novels were continually appearing uncondemned which contained matter far more offensive than anything to be found in respectable newspapers. Editors were concerned for their own characters and the characters of their papers, and he made a strong protest in the interest of the profession to which he belonged. Apparently his efforts were not in vain; the Bill was read a second time, but nothing more was heard of it.

Later in the session another Bill came up from the Commons in which he took an interest, and on 13th August he wrote to Lady Glenesk:—



My old Bill for Poor Law Officers' Superannuation, after four years' stormy efforts at passing, succeeded in squeaking through the Commons to-night.<sup>1</sup> I was busy about it all day, and made arrangements that if it passed, the Lords should meet again at 11—which we did at 12.15, Pembroke in the chair, the two Whips, Lansdowne and myself. One clerk at the table received it. The Commons were just up, and pressed in to see the fun. I solemnly moved the first reading; someone else moved another Bill, and we adjourned to 4 to-morrow, when I take charge of the Bill and move it through its stages.

Which he duly did. Next day it passed through all its stages and received the royal assent.

This may perhaps be regarded as the zenith of Lord Glenesk's career: "Honour, love, obedience, troops of friends"—he had them all. But there was not wanting the small cloud on the horizon. Lady Glenesk's health gave no cause for unusual anxiety; there was nothing to indicate calamity at hand so far as she was concerned. But Oliver had to go abroad again during this summer.

Like his father and mother, Oliver was a great letter-keeper. His correspondence was large, and as a popular member of society and controller of the *Post* he was in communication with many people of mark in many spheres of life. But none are more pleasant to read than his letters from his mother, because they display the most beautiful relationship which can exist, in its happiest aspect. Lady Glenesk was not only his mother, but his friend. She confessed to no undue alarm on Oliver's account, but she sent incessant injunctions to care. "I beg you to remember I have only one son, and I should be very much obliged if you

<sup>1</sup> It had been introduced by Mr James Bailey.

would take care of him," she wrote in one letter. In another there is a more serious note: "I do not like to hear that the apex of both your lungs are still affected. Now you will probably laugh at your mother, but I wish you would try a very simple remedy," which need not be detailed. Nor did she make the mistake of lecturing her son continually upon the duties of marrying discreetly, and avoiding meanwhile all designing mothers and maidens. Writing from Cannes she replies to an inquiry he seems to have made: "No. I had not heard of your engagement, but am not at all surprised. Two eligible young people in the same hotel—something was sure to be said. Here, I think, they would consider it sufficient to be in the same town—even if you had not met."

Oliver's health, in fact, was giving cause for uneasiness; but he had no intention of becoming an invalid. He had his life to lead, and he grudged every hour of interruption. At the outset of his career his mother had written: "Your father writes to me in several letters, 'Oliver works splendidly,' 'Oliver is most useful.' I think one always likes to know pleasant things said of one."

This confidence was never withdrawn. Throughout a very long series of letters there is scarcely a phrase of anything more than friendly criticism and comment on Lord Glenesk's part, and the following is worth quoting as a single exception: "I think the headings are all too big in the *M.P.* There is a great waste of space. . . . I think — was absolute rot and cruel waste of type — and I presume to be paid for — in every way." It says a great deal for the son's capacity for his task that he was from the outset able to satisfy

so experienced a journalist and so deeply interested a critic as his father. It is very curious to observe in letters of such recent date how quickly views of European politics become old-fashioned. In this year, 1896, the Emperor of Russia paid a visit to Paris, and Oliver was told by one correspondent that according to German official opinion this was not intended as a display against Germany so much as a menace to England. The writer went on to argue that if we could only settle the Egyptian question with France we should do well to throw our interests into the balance with the dual rather than with the triple alliance. The former gave more promise of stability; the latter, in the event of a crisis, would be at the mercy of the individual interests of its members at the moment. Yet, he added, we ought to do nothing to alienate the Germans; their sentiments towards us were not pleasant, and we ought to do our best to improve them. Another letter speaks of Russia as "the great European Power"; the one which we ought to watch carefully and invite to a friendly understanding. A third talks of the French navy as a formidable rival which we cannot afford to neglect; it is the only one we need look upon with apprehension, although Germany, "perhaps in 1920," will possess a formidable fleet. Some of his friends were far-seeing, but many of their predictions have been falsified; and a study of such a collection as this drives one to the conclusion that in political forecast the shrewdest judgment is at the mercy of circumstance and chance, and that he who would be a safe prophet had better take short views.

There was one policy, however, to which the *Post* had committed itself years ago, and from which it refused

to be driven. Turkey was in trouble again. The Cretan question was disturbing all the chancelleries of Europe. Armenian Christians were being massacred, and there was sufficient excitement here to provoke a demonstration in Hyde Park in imitation, though faint imitation, of the days when the Bulgarian atrocities were agitating men's minds. War with Greece was seen to be inevitable, and public sympathy was on the side of Greece. Yet the *Post* was determined that the Sultan should have fair play, and was not going to stultify the St James's Hall Address of 1878.<sup>1</sup> And the reward of consistency was not wanting. In the following year Lord Glenesk received a letter from Constantinople announcing that the Sultan desired to present him with "some precious articles . . . in slight recognition of the unbiased view and attitude adopted by the *Morning Post* during events in this country of the past eighteen months"; also to confer on Lady Glenesk the Grand Cordon of the "Shefakat" (Compassion) in brilliants. From another source he learnt that his Majesty had no other English newspaper read to him than the *Morning Post*—which under the circumstances was a pardonable weakness. One cannot help feeling that it was rather hard that Oliver's position should not have been made known so that some more "precious articles" might have been added as his share.<sup>2</sup>

Upon the whole the years 1896 and 1897 were calm

<sup>1</sup> Lord Glenesk wrote to his wife later:—"The Turks have punished those Greeks and no mistake."

<sup>2</sup> After the battle of Domoko, where the Greeks suffered a decisive defeat, the late Mr Wilfrid Pollock, who represented the *Morning Post*, outstripped all his colleagues by riding from Chalcis to Athens on a bicycle, and enabled his paper to publish a descriptive report a day before any other.

and uneventful. In the former the Jameson Raid was the most disturbing event abroad; in home politics there was nothing more troublesome than a difficulty with an Education Bill in the House of Commons and a threatened revolt of Irish landowners in the House of Lords. From Egypt came occasional tidings: it was known that the movement had begun that was to carry into the Soudan, if not retribution, at all events belated vindication of our desire and our power to assert the right and redress the wrong. But there was nothing to cast a shadow upon the pageantry and rejoicing which were to mark the coming year and to remove all other interests to a distance.

The Queen's second jubilee will surely be remembered as the gladdest and proudest episode in the lives of our generation. All seemed to be well with us. Pessimism had not yet come into fashion; we were not fearful of dangers either within or without. England appeared to be incomparably great. Our Sovereign, in span of years, in knowledge, in proved excellence as a ruler, stood beyond pretence of comparison on the part of any of the kings and emperors who brought or sent the tribute of their homage. Our dominions were evidently innumerable: men of all hues, from half the tribes and races upon earth, had congregated to own allegiance to our Imperial authority. It was enough to turn our heads. No element was wanting to stimulate our confidence and pride; there was nothing to ruffle our complacency; so that men wondered what Mr Kipling meant when he wrote his *Recessional*.

Queen Victoria was in a position perhaps without a parallel in history. Few amongst the multitudes who

poured out their hearts that day had ever seen the Queen before: none, it may be said, had spoken to her or heard her speak. To nearly all she was an abstraction, an idea; yet never was general or minister at the moment of triumph more truly the hero and idol of the people. And nothing in retrospect can be more pleasant than the reflection that the Queen knew. She read the hearts of her subjects and understood that for sixty years of labour, with many cares and many sorrows, she was repaid now with loyal and loving gratitude without measure. Never was better case for mortal to breathe a "Nunc dimittis." Her life's work was perfect and complete. By the laws of nature it was impossible that many years should be left to her. Few, indeed, remained, but, sad to say, these were to be laden with a burden of anguish as grievous as any she had ever had to bear. "Infelix opportunitate mortis": it was to be a tragic anti-climax to so much glory.

Meanwhile "the last dread curse of angry heaven, the gift, the future ill to know," had not befallen her, and the Queen was preparing for the Jubilee. Early in June 1897 Lord Glenesk wrote to his wife from Glen Muick:—

. . . . The Queen last night was more than gracious. . . . Very pleasant dinner, and afterwards H.M. gave me quite a special audience; wanted to know all about you and all about Cannes, and why we did not buy Norreys Castle in the Isle of Wight. . . . I never saw her looking better. She and they are all tremendously worked, but it seems to agree, and H.M. is in high spirits. She was so sorry to hear about Middleton, the clergyman, who had a seizure and is lying dangerously ill. She told them to telegraph enquiries at once. . . . A generally interesting talk.



The allusion to Cannes brings into its place an addition to Lord Glenesk's scheme of life. Lady Glenesk had spent many winters in the south of France; he was master of his own time, now that he was no longer tied down to the paper or the House of Commons. To have one's own home is infinitely preferable to being a lodger, and Lord Glenesk decided to buy the Château St Michel at Cannes. It is never wise to express a predilection, but the present writer must give his opinion for what it is worth, that this is one of the most desirable of havens. Underneath the piny hills it stands above the sea, in the midst of a fair garden, to which in course of time Lord Glenesk added large tracts of ground reclaimed from the mountain-side. No doubt he counted on finding amusement and a new interest in this, and perhaps in the end he did so. But at the outset it was to be the scene of the first great calamity of his mature life.

In March 1898 Lady Glenesk was seized with a sudden illness. An immediate operation was performed, but it appeared that nothing could have saved her life. On the 28th she died. Lord Glenesk arrived from London in time to see her once more. "Last night she spoke of you and Liliás and said the dearest things," he wrote to Oliver. "Some time ago she expressed a wish to rest at Hampstead . . . of which she was so fond. . . . My dear fellow, bear up with her courage for her sake, and to live a life worthy of her."

It is not necessary to add anything to what has been said of Lady Glenesk in a previous chapter; but as a parting tribute two letters may be quoted which she had treasured, desiring that after her death they should be given to her daughter:—

*Sir Algernon Borthwick to his Wife.**Dec. 7, 1883.*

. . . . Your pleasure is really the aim of my life, and if my public career corresponds to your fond anticipations it will add a new charm to success in the thought that you who have stood so bravely by my side are satisfied. What I owe to you and your advice, aid, and comfort, I hope my children will always understand. I acknowledge it with all my heart, dearest and best of wives.

*Jan. 1, 1884.*

. . . . May you there [the new house in Piccadilly] see the dear children grow to manhood and womanhood worthy of their dear mother. And may I fulfil your best expectations in the career which already owes all its best success to you.

Lady Glenesk left this world at a time of general unrest. China was being raided by the Powers; Russia was especially active, and conduct which was considered provocative had inflamed a large number of people in this country into a state of war fever. Friction over the government of Crete opened the risk of a conflagration in the Near East. We were engaged in a campaign on the Indian frontier; we were about to advance on Khartoum; in South Africa and West Africa, where we were at cross purposes with France, we had cause for apprehension. It was notorious that the Powers of Europe, in conflict upon many issues, were united in unfriendly feeling towards ourselves. People were talking light-heartedly of our readiness to fight all the world if occasion came: meanwhile the *Spectator* asserted<sup>1</sup> that it was really no exaggeration to say that we might at any hour receive a telegram which would show that the avoidance of hostilities had become almost an impossibility. In two of his last letters to his wife

<sup>1</sup> 13th February.

Lord Glenesk had written: "Nobody knows what is coming, but the City is tranquil"; and "The world is really heaving with volcanic movements in Asia and Africa. It will be wonderful if conflicts do not result." On 18th February Mr Chamberlain read some telegrams from West Africa in the House of Commons which left no doubt that there was imminent peril of conflict between France and England. It was not unnatural that the discussion of such a contingency in the Press should have alarmed some of the English residents at Cannes and set them making plans for getting out of the country. Lord Glenesk did not carry his apprehensions to this extent; taking example from the City, he remained tranquil.

Before the year was over we find him urging tranquillity again. In January 1898 rumours had been heard of a body of white men, said to be French, who had made their appearance at Fashoda on the White Nile. Nothing definite was known, and there was no official recognition given in Paris. Our Government had not sufficient ground for entering a protest, but they made it known that any such movement on the part of France would be regarded as an "unfriendly act." No sooner had Sir Herbert Kitchener entered Khartoum in September than the facts were established. A French expedition under Major Marchand, with a force of a hundred Senegalese soldiers, had arrived at Fashoda on a mission in which peace and war may be said to have kissed one another: the nominal object was scientific research; the practical result was to bring England and France into violent collision. The Khalifa had sent boats to reconnoitre these intruders, and they had been met with rifle fire. The conqueror

of Khartoum at once renewed these investigations, and met with a similar reception ; but he was using one of the Khalifa's boats, and nothing else was to be expected. Having secured communication with Major Marchand he was able to proceed on a more friendly footing ; but if the spirit of peace prevailed on the White Nile, it was otherwise in the neighbourhood of the British Channel. A very serious tension existed, and the possibility of war with France had to be taken into immediate account. Kitchener and Marchand had no local press to inflame their minds ; the English and French newspapers could do nothing else than state their respective cases with a vigour verging on defiance.

So far as the *Morning Post* was concerned counsels of moderation came with authority which commanded immediate respect. Throughout these pages care has been taken to avoid undue disclosure of the intercourse with the Royal family in private life to which Lord Glenesk had the privilege to be admitted. It would not be difficult to compile a chapter of table-talk from his letters. He frequently dined at Balmoral ; both there and elsewhere he had opportunities of hearing the late Queen speak on many subjects. With King Edward he was brought into contact in public business for many years ; he was the King's guest at Sandringham and his host at Glen Muick, and was indebted to him for many acts of kindness. We have heard of his visiting the Duke of Coburg in Germany : in another letter he describes the Duke as "full of talk and fun" when they dined together at the Marlborough Club. His correspondence is full of allusions to what other members of the Royal family have done for him, or said to him. All this, however, was recorded for his wife alone, and in

confidence it should be preserved. But on this occasion he had a conversation with Queen Victoria which is fit matter for public knowledge:—

*Lord Glenesk to Oliver Borthwick.*

GLEN MUICK,  
Oct. 28 (1898).

I had a long audience of the Queen yesterday and she talked of all things. . . . Then after some other talk she made a strong appeal to me to do all in my power to restrain the Press, and especially my own paper, from exasperating French feeling at such a crisis . . . . when no doubt I was naturally not able to look after things as I used to. . . . She said the newspapers could do so much for peace if only they would refrain from inflaming passion. Of course I pointed out that the *M.P.* was precisely taking a calm line; and so it has most admirably since the publication of the Blue and Yellow Books. Previously it certainly, to my view, took too much the assumption "*nous sommes trahis*," rather than the more likely presumption that Lord S., the chief of our party, would do his duty. The Q., I should say, however pained by the possibility of war, gave no intimation of shrinking from her duty if it were necessary, but protested against passions being aroused by unnecessary words that could be assumed to be provocative. She said the outlook was more hopeful, and she deplored the weakness of people at Dinard and other places leaving France. She said Kitchener was coming on Monday, and she was looking forward with great interest to his visit of two days. She said one great puzzle was what to do with all the prisoners<sup>1</sup>—"we have so many more than people know of"—and the wounded. She also expressed much admiration of Slatin. . . . In yesterday's *Post* the leader is very good, and I am always so glad to see the bubble Fashoda burst—such a hollow pretext—and the Bahr el Ghazal and its watershed resolutely defended.<sup>2</sup> . . . I shall go to meet

<sup>1</sup> After the battle of Omdurman.

<sup>2</sup> A compromise was suggested on the basis of making the Upper Bahr el Ghazal a buffer state under Belgian control.

Kitchener at the station on Monday. I offered him to come here for quiet with Harriet and myself for a day before 'or after Balmoral, but I feel pretty certain that he can hardly spare a moment. . . .

This letter was preceded by a telegram: "Take care not to add fuel to French fire."

Lord Glenesk's presumption that Lord Salisbury would do his duty was fully justified. The familiar taunt that England is always malleable was conspicuously falsified. There was no yielding: the question, it was boldly asserted, admitted of no evasion. Happily the French Government recognised that we were on firm ground, and accepted our arguments. War on an heroic scale, and calamitous in corresponding degree, we were not to suffer; but the world was not at peace. We had not escaped our share of fighting, nor were we spared the burden of apprehension and unrest.

At this period began a correspondence in which history repeated itself up to a point, and then turned into sharp contrast. Lord Glenesk had been Lord Randolph Churchill's friend until his death, and had cherished the memory of his friendship and of his public career. Now the two sons were in warm and close sympathy; but for them there was to come the parting of the ways in public life, and it was the Member of Parliament that was to survive the journalist. Mr Churchill had been with the Malakand Field Force in 1897, and was attached to Sir W. Lockhart's Tirah Expeditionary Force in 1898. He was serving in the 4th Hussars in India, but in the former campaign he had acted as correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, and had there discovered his extraordinary gift of descriptive writing: this afterwards took form in his *Story of the Malakand Field Force*.



CAMP, PESHAWAR,  
April 2 (1898).

MY DEAR OLIVER,—Perhaps as I have not written myself I cannot complain of your silence. Since I left England I have had a busy, varied, and exciting life. You may have seen in the *D.T.* some account of my movements, and perhaps in the book which has since been published. I hope you have reviewed it—amiably for preference. . . . I have come up here again on Sir William Lockhart's staff. . . . I feel sure you have rejoiced at not having to write the obituary notice you promised. It was touch and go on two occasions, but I seem to be reserved for the workhouse. I read the *Morning Post* out here occasionally, and am glad to see you have not joined the ignorant chorus of criticism which has been raised against the soldiers and commanders in this country. I feel a very strong contempt and resentment against those renegade officers who have abused their superiors anonymously. . . . Do write and tell me some news; you surely can think of something to say—a journalist! I am trying to get to Egypt. . . . If so I shall continue to scribble and bring out another book—barring accidents, that is.

When shall I see England again? you ask—or rather, not caring a damn, you don't ask. I would reply I return *via* Khartoum<sup>1</sup> probably March next year, 1899, that is. But I contemplate a better scheme, and with God's mercy we may meet sooner—at Willis's!—Yours ever,

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.

Lord Glenesk's life henceforth merges imperceptibly into that of Oliver. So far as the office of the *Post* was concerned, Oliver reigned in his stead:<sup>2</sup> in other matters Oliver was his chief lieutenant; but the father had by no means forsaken all public interests. It was a year, of course, of mourning and retirement, but in December he spoke at the Mansion House at a meeting called to

<sup>1</sup> Khartoum fell on 2nd September 1898. The writer was there, attached to the 21st Lancers.

<sup>2</sup> Communications from the office at this time clearly demonstrate the success attending on his administration.

consider the erection of a Gordon Memorial at Khartoum. Lord Kitchener was his friend, and he took a personal interest in the reclamation of the Soudan, in addition to a sense of satisfaction on national grounds. His speech brought him at least one marked compliment. A gentleman living in a house called Glen-Esk was moved to write on behalf of himself and his family to assure him they felt it an honour to dwell in a house that bore the "illustrious name of one who had at heart such high and noble principles." After this he went to Cannes with his sister, to take up the severed life at Château St Michel. He reports his arrival in Paris to Oliver, and relates a curious incident connected with some amateur theatricals to which the Ambassador<sup>1</sup> was to have gone: "The leading lady was telling her husband about the rehearsal when he fell back dead, and the leading gentleman, jumping out of a window (his part), hurt himself so badly that he had to be taken to a hospital." In another letter he repeats conversations which he had with various distinguished foreigners in Paris. From one he learnt that the Portuguese were trying to raise a loan, offering their colonies and Delagoa Bay as securities. Another had assured him that the German Emperor was now warmly disposed towards England but contemplated no alliance; that the French were drawing towards Germany, persuading themselves that she would be willing to come to some compromise about Alsace-Lorraine—an aspiration not likely to be fulfilled. A third had declared that the French ships were better than ours since they had no unarmoured parts; many of ours might be burnt like the Armada; the French officers were more scientific than ours, though the men

<sup>1</sup> Sir E. Monson.

were not so well trained; finally, the French were to overtake us in fighting strength in a year or two. His friends seemed to agree that there was no immediate prospect of war; their only fear was stirred by the contemplation of Russia; they mistrusted the Czar's Peace Conference at the Hague, and looked for trouble in the scramble for China. He was also invited to discuss the probability of the black races expelling the entire white population from Africa; but here Lord Glenesk's powers of attention seem to have been exhausted, and he says he avoided a discussion of the question.

## CHAPTER XVIII

1899-1900

IN the year 1899 I saw more of Lord Glenesk than ever before or afterwards. In January I was at Cannes. A humble position in the political world had brought me into contact with him, and I had met him at dinner occasionally. I had known Lady Glenesk, and had visited her in Piccadilly and at Hampstead; but never until now had I talked at length with him. I saw him at his own Château St Michel and at other villas. More than once I met him in the morning by the sea with Signor Tosti, who was staying with him, and joined them in their walk. Later in the year I stayed with him at Glen Muick. Lord Glenesk talked in the old style. It was the antithesis of chatter. One felt that what he was saying interested him, and he intended it to interest other people. He had no fear of being interrupted; there was plenty of time; he was in no hurry, and told his story with deliberation and a sense of artistic finish. He never dragged in a topic. He had seen enough of men and things to be ready for any turn that conversation might take, and he was ready to help it along with an ample fund of anecdote and reminiscence. He was inclined to be perturbed at the moment. We were again in trouble with France; this time Madagascar was the origin of the quarrel. The nervousness amongst

villa owners was greater than before, and Lord Glenesk now confessed that there were disadvantages in owning property in a country with which we were liable to go to war. He did not come to Cannes to be worried; and perhaps because anxious people persisted in asking his advice, he undoubtedly was worried. However, he did not allow this to upset him much, nor his plans in any wise. Moreover, he was looking forward to a visit from Sir William Harcourt, who in December had publicly announced in a letter to Mr Morley that the bickerings over the leadership of their party must cease and that he was determined to withdraw from the competition. He was to profit by his freedom and take a holiday, in anticipation, so Lord Glenesk believed, of going to the House of Lords with an earldom; but this honour, it turned out, he had decided not to accept.

There was no talk then of coming trouble in South Africa. It was known that deep discontent existed amongst the Outlanders in the Transvaal, and that the relations between Dutch and British residents were keenly antagonistic. In a vague way people felt that something would have to be done, but it was not until the spring that people realised that something was going to be done. Even then the reports of the abortive conferences between Sir Alfred Milner and Mr Kruger caused no excitement and little anxiety. At the worst there could be nothing beyond one of our "little wars." Majuba was not forgotten; but nobody doubted that we had yielded then through a pusillanimous spirit, not because of military inferiority. The Raid had prejudiced the case to some extent, and the Outlanders were living under a cloud. Meanwhile, from the very best sources

of information came the very worst advice. Soldiers in high position, who had served in South Africa, spoke lightly of the task of re-conquest. Men who were in personal communication with the best known Englishmen in the country scouted the idea of serious resistance. One traveller who went to see for himself came home to say that he had personally examined the burgher rolls and that the two Republics together could not put more than 21,000 men into the field. Many were wise after the event, but there were certainly some who gauged the danger in advance. More than one person could produce a letter or refer to a conversation in which something like the truth had been predicted. In one case there was a written forecast of 1898 that war must come, and that 70,000 troops would be the lowest possible force required. At the same time a general officer had declared at a dinner table that war was inevitable, and that, knowing the country as he did, he was not prepared to say which side would win. Warnings such as these fell on ears, not deaf, but unbelieving. Nor was this altogether discreditable. It came not from indifference nor conceit. Common folks can only draw their conclusions from the evidence at their disposal, and in this case the preponderance of evidence against the probability of war, or the possibility of a serious war, was no doubt overwhelming. In January, however, the barometer was falling unnoticed, and no one listened for the coming storm. I cannot remember any mention of South Africa in my talks with Lord Glenesk; and even when we talked much of the coming war in September, he committed himself to no confident opinions. Oliver, indeed, had paid much attention to South African affairs, and could claim to have been on



the side of the serious-minded at a very early period of the history. He was conducting the paper when this letter was received by his father. If at a later stage he was outspoken concerning the gravity of the situation and the shortcomings of those who had had to prepare for it, at all events he could with justice say, "I told you so":—

COLONIAL OFFICE,  
31 March 1896.

DEAR LORD GLENESK,—Naturally the letter published in Saturday's *Morning Post* about the gathering war gloom in South Africa has attracted our attention here. Do you think I might be furnished with the name and address of your informant so that if we think it advisable I might privately communicate with him?—Believe me, yours sincerely,

SELBORNE.

*Noted.*—Put in communication with the writer.

In April Lord Glenesk consented to be nominated for the office of Chancellor of the Primrose League for the ensuing year. He had twice before occupied the post, and the outgoing Chancellor, the Duke of Marlborough, in making the proposal, pointed out that "No one has the knowledge and experience that you possess in the past workings of the League."

His diary shows that he frequently dined out during the summer, but his life was quieter and less varied than it had been. A careful note is made on 6th June of the wedding of Lady Glenesk's nephew, Mr Lewis Harcourt. This no doubt he attended with peculiar interest: he had always lived on affectionate terms with the bridegroom; of the high regard in which he held him he gave proof by making him an executor of his will, and—as will be explained presently—a titular director of the *Morning Post*. The mutual devotion

of Sir William Harcourt and his son has become a matter of notoriety outside the private circle, and there can be no impropriety in revealing the unconscious plagiarism of these two letters. Sir William, in writing to announce his son's engagement, had said: "I feel sure that his future happiness is assured, which has always been to me the first object of my life"; whilst the son reported: "My father is delighted, which was essential to my happiness." It will be convenient here to notice another instance of community of purpose between father and son. In an undated letter Sir William wrote to Lord Glenesk: "I shall probably utter some detestable sentiments on the subject of the Government, and it may be worth your while to report for the sake of pitching into me, so I send you this warning." Mr Harcourt wrote to him not many weeks before he died: "I know the *M.P.* sometimes reports its opponents' speeches, if only for the reason of pointing out their absurdity. I wonder if it would report one of its directors (me!). . . . I shall probably have something to say on navy . . . . etc."

On 24th September I went to Glen Muick. I find in my diary, "Very picturesque: no great hills near; but such as there are, much wooded. Party here: [I give their formal designations] Marquise d'Hautpoul, General Sir John and Lady Maxwell, Miss Edwardes, Major Hon. E. St Aubyn, Lord Hyde, Lord Garioch, Lord James of Hereford, Mr George Lane Fox, Mr Mahaffy, and Mr Edward Terry." The three last gentlemen, it will be observed, represented three great interests in the life of their host—the Primrose League, the *Morning Post*, and the Stage. Honesty requires a truthful transcript: the diary goes on:—

I stalked four days; only had two difficult shots and missed them both. One day, 3000 feet above Loch Muick amongst the snow, I had a rare sight to see. There is no news; and when one is out stalking from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., one ceases to fret about sublunary affairs.

I cannot but regret that so much open-air occupation made me neglect recording some things which I should be glad to remember now. There was a great deal of talk on many subjects, as was natural in a party of such composition. Lord Glenesk retained the old custom of conversing liberally at breakfast, and amongst other topics I remember his telling us about Mr Andrew Montagu; and assuring us that a war was a great misfortune for a newspaper. The *Morning Post* must be supplied with the latest information and must employ the best correspondents: there could be no appreciable increase in the daily demand: the profit would be made by such of the evening papers as had no correspondent on the spot, and could rely on a brisk sale in the streets, dressing up the news of the day to attract attention. He also talked of marriages which were considered unaccountable. In his opinion, women were seldom proof against constancy. Apparently he accepted Sheridan's maxim that "every woman can be gained by time."<sup>1</sup>

Not yet were many people seriously alarmed: "unfortunate" and "unpleasant" were the epithets applied to the war which was now inevitable, rather than "terrible" and "disastrous," soon to be in common use. I find notes of lunching with a cavalry regiment after leaving Glen Muick:—

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<sup>1</sup> When I left Glen Muick Lord Glenesk was preparing to receive a large party, including King Edward and the Grand Duke Michael and Countess Torby.

They are all being fitted out with khaki, but they don't seem much excited: they are convinced it will be all over before they get there. One of them said, "It looks as if they wanted to send the whole army."

In a house where I stayed on the way to London a young man came in from fishing, cheering loudly and shouting, "It's war: now we'll let them have it."

Lord Glenesk had by this time begun a correspondence with one of his oldest friends, Lady Somers; it was regularly maintained, and gives a running comment on his life during the following years. To her he wrote on 11th September:—

No war with Boerdom for three weeks. . . . The Queen looks pale after Osborne, and is dreadfully worried. The despatch about the last Cabinet was so long, it took an hour and a half to transmit, and what with ciphering and deciphering it was not in her hands till 11 at night.

Before very long Lady Somers was writing in her turn:—

This terrible war—words one has heard over and over again. How they come home to one. It makes one tremble for Somey,<sup>1</sup> whose long rides carrying despatches must be full of danger. . . . Poor ——! She has had all that love can give: so much the worse for her, poor thing. . . .

On 9th October the Boers presented their ultimatum, and war began forthwith. On the 17th Parliament met. Lord Salisbury puzzled some people and vexed others by assuming a tone not untinged with levity, and speaking of "an amiable but very sensitive old gentleman," and of "hysterical schoolgirls"; but Mr Chamberlain, two days later in the House of Commons, in a speech of nearly three hours, drew the picture in its right proportions. His statement was temperate;

<sup>1</sup> Her grandson, Mr Somers Somerset, who was acting as a correspondent.

his manner grave, but full of dignity. It was a performance not unworthy of such an occasion, and left with those who heard it a clear conscience, if not a light heart.

All light-heartedness was speedily to disappear as the illusion of a short and simple campaign was swept away. Ominous tidings came from Natal. The garrisons at Ladysmith there, and elsewhere at Kimberley and Mafeking, were known to be besieged and were believed to be hard pressed. The officer who jeered at the idea of sending out our whole army was nearer the truth than he imagined. Interest was centred in our holding our own until General Buller's army should arrive. Before very long our auxiliary troops were being called upon, and even untrained civilians were recruited with alacrity. Alarming rumours filled the air: the native tribes were going to join our enemy. To add to our confusion, the Powers were going to call upon us to retire from Egypt forthwith.

The *Morning Post* at once recognised our danger and spoke out plainly. Oliver procured the best military advice available, and proceeded to set matters before his readers with unsparing frankness. There were none of the insidious attacks on the Government that would be expected from those who disapproved of the war on principle; putting the case at its worst, he never suggested that it was beyond our power to succeed. But he saw that the task was most formidable, and he feared that it was not going to be met with practical wisdom and resolute spirit. That being so, it became the duty of the paper to enlighten the public and urge them to demand adequate provision for meeting the emergency. On 27th November he dined with me, and I noted next

day: "Oliver is pessimistic. He says he has studied the Transvaal for years for the *Morning Post*; that the Boers are provisioned for two years; that a reverse would set the whole country against us; that the Cabinet, Milner, and Buller fear this; and that if it happened they would probably leave Natal to its fate and mobilise at Cape Town. We should have 200,000 against us. . . ."

Reverses came soon enough, and they "came not single spies, but in battalions." On 5th December a distinguished general told the present writer that he had no doubt whatever that in the coming week all our past misfortunes would be remedied and the garrisons relieved, and that by Christmas we should be able to sweep the country clear before us. In the following week General Gatacre met with defeat at Stormberg; Lord Methuen was repulsed with heavy loss at the Modder River; and Sir Redvers Buller was driven back from Colenso with a loss of eleven guns. There was some excuse for pessimism. People were dismayed, and many raised the cry of "*nous sommes trahis*." They looked for a scapegoat, and selected the Secretary of State for War, who had to endure the anger of a people astonished and ashamed.

The year drew to its close in settled gloom. Nothing else was thought of then; looking back now one finds few traces of interest besides. Only one incident connected with Parliament occurs so far as Lord Glenesk was concerned. At the end of the short autumn session Lord Hardwicke begged for his support for a motion in the House of Lords protesting against the erection of a statue of Cromwell outside the Palace of Westminster, and urging that the site should be reserved



for one in the future to the memory of Queen Victoria. Lord Glenesk yielded to no man in devotion to his sovereign, but he was a sincere admirer of Cromwell. It doubtless had no influence on his judgment, but there remained the interesting fact that his wife and children were descended from the Protector, and that his son had been given the name of Oliver.<sup>1</sup> He was not likely, therefore, to respond. Six voted for the motion, and as the business of the House was practically finished there were only four present to oppose. Lord Glenesk was not there. But it made little difference; the statue was duly set in its place.

Lord Glenesk was directly affected by the war. Lord Bathurst was Colonel of the 4th Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment. The militia were embodied; he was sent first to Ireland; afterwards to St Helena to guard the Boer prisoners; and Lady Bathurst at once decided to accompany him. She was able to come home later on a visit, but went back again and remained until the battalion was relieved at the end of the war. It was a curious turn of fortune. It probably occurred to nobody who was at their wedding that the prospects of married life included the contingency of playing the part of Sir Hudson Lowe, without the animating character of a Napoleon to enliven the scene. There was a curious coincidence attending the selection of this station. Lord and Lady Bathurst lived in a house called New Longwood. It had been built by the British Government for Napoleon's use, under the direction of Henry, third Earl Bathurst, the Colonial Secretary of the day. Napoleon died before it was ready for occu-

<sup>1</sup> The Earls of Clarendon trace their descent from King Edward III. and from Oliver Cromwell.

pation, but he had expressed the strongest antipathy to the residence which was being prepared for him. The ordeal which he was spared had in course of time to be endured by the Minister's own descendant.

Oliver meanwhile was carrying out his policy with vigour. He was far from wishing to disparage his countrymen or harass the Government, but he was not a subservient party apologist, and he saw no good to be gained by attempting to conceal facts or screen Ministers. It followed as a matter of course that some of his readers were shocked, and he was reproached for not giving comfort and support; but he was not without consolation. At the beginning of the New Year he received such encouragement as this:—

"Your attitude . . . will place the *Morning Post* in the position of the *Times*," wrote one. "To have the courage to tell the truth at such a time is not pleasant. . . . A newsagent who knows told me the other day that the demand for the *Morning Post* proportionately is in excess of that of any other morning paper, and especially during the past few days."

A sound old Tory wrote:—

The *M.P.* list of distribution of forces to-day is very useful. Will you not supplement it by giving the numerical strength of each cavalry regiment already in South Africa . . . and of the cavalry, yeomanry, and other mounted men under orders to go out? Kruger has at least 50,000 mounted men. How many have we? We are in the lull before the storm, and I think we are still not half prepared. Last October an Eton Lower Boy asked me, "Are not the Boers all mounted?" I said "Yes." "Then how are our foot soldiers to catch them?"

The nation's rush to arms is splendid . . . but we may find the warlike enthusiasm fading. *Now* is England's chance; but it all depends on mounted forces. The Eton boy was wiser in October than the War Officials are now. . . . Do peg away in the *M.P.* for horses, horses, horses, more and more

horses, and irregular lancers on them. I should defy sentiment and send for Sikh and Goorkha irregular cavalry, the finest regiments I ever saw and admirably suited to South Africa. Dark skins be hanged—they are British subjects and fight for the Queen.

On 8th January 1900 Mr Balfour made a speech at Manchester which carried matters further. He set out to explain the difficulties which beset early preparations for war. In the first place, the hands of Government were tied by the complications of the Raid. Beyond this the country would never have countenanced an elaborate mobilisation which would have seemed provocative and wasteful. The inference, rightly or wrongly, drawn from this was that the Government had waited for a lead from the public instead of acting promptly, and the *Morning Post* made no secret of its indignation. Oliver undoubtedly felt warmly and spoke sharply. To the present writer he declared that this was not honest statesmanship, and "we do at least demand honesty in our statesmen." So direct was his censure that he drew an article of protest from the *Spectator*, which was not a prejudiced journal: the editor himself commented on Mr Balfour's language with considerable asperity, but he deprecated recrimination.

Mr Balfour's speech was no doubt unfortunate: it was waste of time to tell the public that they were to blame. All they cared about was the present and the future, not the past. But there was something to be said for his argument. The generals, with rare exceptions, had demanded no heroic measures. The public would not have watched them with enthusiasm. Enemies at home and abroad would have raised a roar of execration at such a display of bullying and menace. Moreover, it is

possible that little would have been gained. It is not incredible that the Boers were fully prepared, and would only have anticipated events by striking at once. It may be said that they had to wait upon the seasons, but later events showed that one time of year suited them as well as another. It was also alleged that Mr Balfour spoke with the chivalrous intention of assuming on the part of the Government the responsibility which hitherto had been laid to the charge of the War Minister personally. However that may be, the speech had a damaging effect on the Minister who made it, without relieving anybody else; and the *Morning Post* certainly had no intention of explaining it away. Again some readers were concerned, and Lord Glenesk received a letter from an old constituent who objected to the "tone of bitter criticism with which your paper, the *Morning Post*, is unfortunately pleased to attack the Queen's Government. . . . It is felt that these attacks cannot be regarded by a dispassionate mind as other than a wilful and disloyal attempt to embarrass and harass those who have the cares of empire on their shoulders." Lord Glenesk replied with courtesy, but not without spirit. He at once repudiated the charge of disloyalty. "If you had read the *Morning Post* daily," he said, "you would have seen warning after warning about artillery, cavalry, mounted infantry, mobility, the strength of the Boers, the difficulties of the ground—all neglected, and resulting in this cruel loss of life and humiliation." It was the organisation of the War Office, he went on, that must be changed, not the Government; and he finished his letter, "I pray your patience: you will see the *M.P.* amply vindicated." His correspondent rejoined with good temper, claiming the popular character of the man

in the street. He ruefully admitted the "suicidal wreck Mr Balfour has just occasioned to his own reputation," yet he urged emphatically that to upset the Government at such a moment would be a fatal mistake. Apart from domestic confusion, we were being watched by unfriendly eyes throughout Europe, and "the strength of our Ministry alone can save us from the intrigues of jealous nations." He drew a picture of possible combinations of disaster military, political, and financial, which is sufficient evidence of the depressed state of feeling that prevailed in the street.

It is remarkable that in such a predicament those who are playing an active part take a far more complacent view than those who sit at home and wait; perhaps on the principle that lookers-on see most of the game. Whilst spirits at home were at the lowest ebb there were some in South Africa who took things lightly. One officer wrote from the centre of operations to his brother a long letter about hounds and grouse, and added, "I could tell you an awful lot about this war but I haven't time." A young officer writing to his mother from the Modder River gave an excellent report of the fishing; he had just learnt with pleasure that an advance was imminent, because he heard that even better sport might be hoped for further on. "*P.S.*—We have fought three battles." The newspapers at the time reproduced rather a ghastly letter from a private soldier describing a battle: "I happened to find a bit of looking-glass. It made a rare bit of fun. As it passed from comrade to comrade, they said, 'Have a last look at yourself, my boy, and bid yourself good-bye.'"

The same cheerful spirit animated the private letters of Mr Winston Churchill. He had gone out as special

correspondent to the *Post*, and his adventures need no recapitulation here. After his escape from prison in Pretoria, with its long tale of vicissitudes, he wrote to Oliver on 5th January from Chieveley Camp:—

*W. S. Churchill to Oliver Borthwick.*

. . . . I daresay my escapades have not been altogether disadvantageous to the *Morning Post*. . . . I have been offered by Sir Redvers Buller, and have accepted, a lieutenancy in the S.A. Light Horse as a very special kindness. . . . My duties consist in carrying messages and acting as galloper to Colonel Byng,<sup>1</sup> so that your interests will not suffer in the least except by the possibility of my being killed or disabled, which, as you know, was not excluded even while I remained a civilian. The advantage is that I can accompany every reconnaissance and visit all outposts . . . and am not bothered with any matters of food or transport. I pointed out to Colonel Byng that I must do my journalistic work . . . but I must say that I ought to bear some little part, however humble, in the war, and naturally I shall not spare myself when it comes to fighting. I hope you will not object to the arrangement in principle, though you are clearly entitled to. . . . I have had a very hard life during the last three months—sea sickness, poor food, imprisonment, and other misfortunes, but I am quite well, as I write. I don't believe that all has been done for me in my adventures by Providence simply in order that I may be shot in the impending battle. I would give a good deal for a good dinner; but I am not likely to get one for several months.

*The Same to the Same.*

*February 5th.*

. . . . Do not lose heart about this war. It is perhaps easier to be brave and calm here than amid sentimentalists at home, but keep a cool quiet belief that all will presently work out as we wish. . . . I have had a great number of narrow escapes in the last few days, but my luck still seems to be first class.

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<sup>1</sup> Brigadier-General the Hon. Julian Byng, M.V.O., C.B.



His next letter takes the form of a forcible remonstrance against the language of the paper, although, he admits, "This is not my business as your correspondent." He says that people in South Africa do not like to see such constant adverse criticism in a Conservative paper; he has received several letters on the subject from Oldham (which he had recently contested at a bye-election) and elsewhere. He argues that a paper which boldly advocated war at the outset has no business to denounce the Government because operations have not turned out as smooth and easy as had been expected. Finally he deprecates very strongly an attempt to undermine the only Government that can stand between the country and a far worse alternative. To which, of course, Oliver's answer was the same as that which Lord Glenesk had returned to his critic.

Again in March he writes :—

I wonder whether I shall see England again, not, at any rate, until I have seen Pretoria, and Bobs has stabled his horse in Kruger's bedroom. Cheer up, and remember Lord Salisbury never lost his sense of proportion in the dark days.

In another letter he says: "This advance into the Free State has cost you a lot of money. . . . I fear this war has been a great expense to you." What Lord Glenesk had said about the financial side of journalism in war had been fully verified. After he came home Mr Churchill wrote to Lord Glenesk to thank him for—

"the generous and unusual salary which you have been good enough to pay me. . . . Only last Saturday Lord Rosebery told me that since the war began he had regularly read the *Morning Post* and had been much struck by the vigorous and impartial spirit which it displayed."

The manager of the paper in one letter makes a sly allusion to such highly-salaried correspondents as W. H. Russell and Archibald Forbes. However, Lord Glenesk attempted no false economy. He secured, or raised no objection when Oliver secured, what he believed to be the best man available, and paid a salary that the best man was worth. Nor was Mr Churchill by any means the only correspondent of the *Post*. From first to last some half-dozen were engaged, and the consequent drain on the proprietor's profits was exhaustive.

Throughout those dark days the most cheering thought had been that not only were there plenty of Englishmen ready to volunteer for service, we had seen another England rising from over-seas and coming to our help. The colonies had not hesitated to send fighting contingents, and we had at least the satisfaction of knowing that there were men of our blood all over the world who thought the union of Empire was worth preserving and worth fighting for. Lord Glenesk appreciated this at its right value, and was anxious to take an opportunity of making public recognition. On 10th July he speaks in a letter of having seen Mr Goschen, the First Lord of the Admiralty, "to whom I was glad to suggest that Australia, who has fought for us at the Cape and is now sending ships to China, should henceforth fly the White Ensign." Mr Goschen, he says, explained the difficulties in the way of making so drastic an innovation in the etiquette and relations of the navy without consideration. "I practically d——d everything and everybody except Nelson, home, and beauty," says Lord Glenesk. The Australian ship *Protector* was commissioned as one of H.M. ships on the China station in September

1900, and during her service she flew the white ensign; but the colonial navies still retain their respective flags—the blue ensign with the colonial badge.

The China Expedition was a serious affair. The worst and most anxious period of the South African war was scarcely ended when bad news came from China. Prolonged droughts had caused a kind of revolt of the peasants. The cultivators of the land had apparently persuaded themselves that their troubles were caused by the foreign missionaries, who had either brought these things to pass or had at all events refrained from removing them. They swarmed into Peking, crying "Long live the dynasty," and "Away with the foreigner." The Chinese Government were between the devil and the deep sea: they could not very well crush the multitude with their loyal shouts; on the other hand, they had no wish to pick a quarrel with all Europe. They procrastinated; made promises which were very likely sincere, though not supported by prompt action; and consented to the Ministers sending to their ships for marine guards. Our representative, Sir Claude Macdonald, was afterwards criticised for making light of the danger. He was accused of saying that a shower of rain would suffice to disperse the rioters.<sup>1</sup> What he did say was that if only the rains would come, they would all hasten back to their holdings. And he provided himself with a garrison which enabled him to save his legation. The fleets of the Powers, thinking to intimidate the Chinese, bombarded the

<sup>1</sup> They were wrongly spoken of as rebels. They rose against the foreigner, not their own rulers. Their name of Boxer was derived from a secret society of which the badge was a clenched fist. One humourist explained it by saying that they were the same as the Boers with the addition of *x*, the unknown quantity.

Taku forts. The effect produced was the extreme contrary. The Chinese Government gave the foreign Ministers orders to quit in twenty-four hours. The German Minister went off to remonstrate, and, with his secretary, was murdered in the street. The mob and the army were then turned loose upon the legations.

Admiral Sir Edward Seymour started with a relieving force, but met with overwhelming resistance, and was compelled to retreat. Then the Powers sent a combined army which succeeded in taking Tientsin on 13th July. The Government at once altered their tone and sent to the legations to inquire why they were firing and fighting, and proposed an armistice. This led to no good results beyond enabling the garrisons to rest and attend to their wounded; the attack was presently renewed as vigorously as before. But the crisis was past. A force consisting of British, Americans, Germans, Indians, and Japanese pushed on to Peking; the siege was raised and the legations saved. They had undergone all the perils and misery which such a situation involves: they had lived under incessant rifle fire with nothing but the coarsest and scantiest of provisions. The Chinese Government were no doubt forced into action, and had not the power, even if they had the will, to protect them; but it is significant that their artillery, which must have made resistance impossible, was never brought into serious use. The guns were fired, it is true, but it seemed as if orders had been given to do no damage, for they remained ill-aimed and ineffectual to the end. Conceivably there was a secret hope that the consequences might not become irremediable; that the Europeans might be able to save themselves, and that

the penalty of utmost vengeance need not be incurred. Be that as it may, London feared the worst, and all hope was abandoned when one paper published a despatch from its correspondent with the definite assurance that all the Ministers had been murdered with their families and staffs, and that Sir Robert Hart had committed suicide. A memorial service was arranged for 21st July, to be held in St Paul's Cathedral.

We have seen that so far as South Africa was concerned Oliver Borthwick took the gravest view, and that the paper incurred some censure for the tone it had adopted. Nobody could accuse him of faint-heartedness in the case of China. He kept himself in constant touch with the best available sources of information, the Foreign Office and the office of the Chinese Customs, and persisted in hoping against hope. When the memorial service was proposed he set his face against it. He obtained authority for saying that it was not to be held at the instigation of the Government. The argument of the paper was that until the evil news had been confirmed beyond doubt, friends and relatives of those who were said to have perished would refuse to believe, and would shrink from funeral rites; if, however, the reports were true, they would afterwards have to regret that they had not attended. The legations had not been captured and their inmates had not been slain. They held out gallantly, and on 15th August all further cause for anxiety was removed by the arrival of the troops. Oliver's faith had been justified, and he had been able to impart the comfort of his sanguine spirit to those who were yielding to despair.

No lover ever wrote more full and vivid letters than those of Oliver to his sister, and during her absence at

St Helena these naturally grew in intensity. A few extracts from them will describe his labours at this time. Early in June he explained the threatened danger. He believed that Russia was fishing in troubled waters : her aim was to take the leading part and become the predominating foreign Power in China.

Should Russia obtain her way and do such a thing, we may all consider our power at an end with the Chinese Government. Now there was only one Power no doubt that really frightened Russia by making a counter demonstration ; that was Great Britain with her 31 ships. So she quietly bides her time till the ships are all well out of the way. And the rising begins, curious coincidence, when we have only one small boat present and Russia has five big ones.

Later on he writes as follows :—

*Oliver Borthwick to Lady Bathurst.*

3rd Aug. 1900.

. . . . I was more often than not out of bed during 20 of the 24 hours that go to make a day. This will in some sort explain another batch of Marquis [chocolate] doing duty for a letter from your loving brother. . . .

I was horrified at this premature burial of those whom everyone hoped were still alive. . . . There was but one means of preventing it, and that was by the intervention of Lord Salisbury. I accordingly went to the Foreign Office only to find that . . . . Lord S. had already declared his inability to interfere in the matter. . . . I accordingly determined to see Lord Salisbury himself, and so went from the F.O. to the House of Lords. I found him making a speech, so I waited on the steps of the throne. As I yet had a great deal of work to get through I asked one of the messengers how long he was likely to go on talking. He said about ten minutes, and doubtless thinking I was interested in the debate, proceeded to give me further information. This led to my telling him I wanted to see Lord S., not hear him. When Lord S. had finished, my friend the messenger came and said, Shall I tell



Lord S. you wish to speak to him? I hesitated, and then said yes. Never having spoken to the Prime Minister before, my scheme had been to catch him going out of the House and introduce myself. Imagine, then, my surprise at my own cheek when I realised that there I was standing on the steps of the throne in full view of the House, sending word to the Premier, whom I did not know, that I desired to speak to him. He came at once, and nothing, I must say, could have been more charming. He listened most attentively to all I had to say, and gave me his reasons for not wishing to interfere. I spoke perhaps more boldly than I should, and wound up by saying that I intended in any circumstances to publish next day the strongest article I could. . . . He went to speak to the Archbishop of Canterbury. . . . That night when I reached the office I found a letter . . . giving me the welcome news that he had changed his mind and had issued a notice to the Press disclaiming any responsibility. The article duly appeared next day, and by two o'clock the Dean announced that he had abandoned the idea of holding the service.

The next letter belongs to the following April (1901), but it may be included here for the sake of a shrewd forecast:—

*The Same to the Same.*

. . . . In a very short time I believe we shall see war declared between Russia and Japan.<sup>1</sup> This may seem nonsense to you, as it undoubtedly does to the majority of people here, but they forget the "no war" cry. It was the same when war broke out between China and Japan, again with America and Spain, and lastly between us and the Boers. People always will take the view, "Oh, they'll never fight." But they do fight. The only thing that keeps Japan quiet at present is the question of the neutrality of France. If France fought them with Russia they would stand no chance; otherwise it is, in my humble belief, an easy win for the Japanese against the Russians. . . . When you get your *Morning Post* of to-day, if you have nothing particular to do, look at the notice of the St James's

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<sup>1</sup> It began in February 1904.

piece, *The Wilderness*. I wrote it. It is written under terrible pressure of time . . . but it will convey to you some idea of the idyllic beauty of the play. . . . Young Esmond, who wrote it, must be a genius to have so well grasped the state of a girl's mind. . . .

Before leaving the year 1900 we may glance at Lord Glenesk's report of himself at Glen Muick.

*Lord Glenesk to Lady Somers.*

*Sept. 10.*

. . . . The children<sup>1</sup> are very amusing. I gave them prayer-books and they are so good at church. Going to their nursery, quiet reigned. "No noise," said they; "service is going on." They had out all their dolls, and had a special service for them and a hymn. Then a collection: and they had made money of the silver off their chocolates!

*Sept. 20.*

. . . . I killed a fine stag in the morning yesterday after a long stalk.<sup>2</sup> . . . Just off stalking again. . . . Prince and Princess Henry of Prussia came to give me an afternoon. . . . I have not seen him for ten years. . . . He proved his "old friendship," as he called it, by giving me a day of himself. He had felt my loss and sorrowed for me, and is now the same frank-hearted and outspoken sailor he ever was.

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<sup>1</sup> Lady Bathurst's.

<sup>2</sup> He was now seventy.

## CHAPTER XIX

1901-1908

IN the early weeks of 1901 the death of Queen Victoria superseded all other national interests. How this affected Lord Glenesk personally will be noticed presently. Setting aside this supreme consideration, the war continued to be the engrossing topic of interest, and the *Morning Post* maintained its reputation for good military information. On 12th February Lord Wolseley wrote to Lord Glenesk: "I read the leader on the army in yesterday's *Morning Post* with deep interest and much instruction. I wish the writer, or the man who gave him his theme to put into words, were to be S. of S. for War." He proceeds with various comments on the state of the army and its rulers, and ends with a surmise that difficulty might be found in getting recruits in future at 13d. a day after five shillings a day had been given to men without any training or special recommendations and no subsequent liabilities as to reserve service.

Lord Glenesk was at Cannes, whence he wrote to Oliver in low spirits; it was very cold, there was no sunshine and no flowers, although March was nearly over. He was not well, yet everyone told him he looked well—which, although he did not say so, is always annoying under the circumstances. He had

decided to give up Glen Muick and sever a long association. He was not happy about the Government. Finally, "the rains have burst the canal, so we have no water and shall have to take to St Galmier, Cologne, and others for washing as well as drinking."

To Lady Somers he wrote on 19th March:—

. . . . I am getting on of course, but I ought to be put out of sight. Everyone says "how well you look," and I do, but that's all except that I am palpably less weak, and like the rest of the world whistling vainly for the sun.

*April 8.*

The little Meriel<sup>1</sup> fell in the nursery the other day and cut her forehead. The doctor had to sew it up and she had chloroform, and her account was, "I went away to dreamland in a golden slipper. . . ." The other day at Vallauris she could not take her eyes off a replica of the Venus of Milo: "Who is that beautiful lady—the most beautiful I ever saw?" She would not look at the garish vases and flamboyant pots. . . .

Another child story may be added here. One of his most admired friends told him in a letter that she had taken her little girl to be presented to Queen Alexandra. Coming home the child had thoughtfully remarked, "I am very sorry to have to tell you you are not as pretty as the Queen."

His tenancy at Glen Muick was not to expire until July, and in June he went there. His letters now were more cheerful. Lord Glenesk was peculiarly sensitive to sun and warmth, as his correspondence shows. The pleasant summer air inspired him with happier views: "Monday's *M.P.* very good-looking in every way"; and again: "Very clever and altogether admirable, your notice. . . ."

<sup>1</sup> Bathurst.

His determination to leave Glen Muick was not surprising. He was in the habit of saying that a country house in Scotland was like an hotel: there was a constant passage of visitors, and after a certain age quick and frequent change becomes distasteful. Lady Glenesk was no longer there to enjoy the social activity, and neither his son nor daughter could be with him often. He was happy in the company of his sister, to whose talents as a hostess he paid frequent tribute in his letters, but the effort of entertaining undoubtedly grew irksome. And there was further inducement for retreat. In January the nation had mourned for the death of Queen Victoria with a sorrow genuine and profound, but they had mourned, as it were, at a distance. Lord Glenesk had for many years been her neighbour and her guest. He had reached a time of life when old ties are severed one by one, and the survivor feels a growing sense of loneliness. In the case of the Queen the sadness of death was intensified by peculiar emotions. She was a personality apart from all others, and the consciousness that her wonderful story was ended, and her revered presence gone for ever from Deeside, cannot have failed to create a most melancholy impression. He was doubtless well advised to turn to the convivial life of Homburg for a change. His diary shows that he took his full share here in the passing gaieties: he had daily engagements for lunch and dinner: he dined with the King, and returned hospitality in kind. The list of one large dinner-party has a note added: "band and conjurer."

Before leaving London he had moved the second reading in the House of Lords of his Plumbers Registration Bill, of which the object was to provide a

scheme under which plumbers might, if they chose, become registered as duly qualified. Lord Kenyon on behalf of the Government accepted the motion with the genial observation that "we have all suffered from incompetent plumbers." By agreement, however, further steps were postponed until the following year in order that a practical scheme might be incorporated in the measure. It may be noted at once that next year the Bill passed through the House of Lords, but in the pressure of business it went no further than a first reading in the House of Commons.

Lord Glenesk received private letters from South Africa apart from the *Morning Post* correspondence. One of these gives a striking comment on the influence of English newspapers upon the Boers. The pro-Boer papers had nothing but an irritating effect; the Boers strongly resented being described as amiable peasants struggling against a mighty power. What they did like was to see themselves described as the invincible patriots whose triumphant defiance of the British army was engaging the admiring attention of civilised mankind. Nothing could be more mischievous than to let them imagine we were growing weary and exhausted, and must eventually give way. The line to take was that the war to us was a valuable experiment in field training; that we looked forward to putting our entire army through the course by degrees, and that we did not particularly mind how long it went on; that meanwhile the Boer prisoners were well and happy, and that their children were hastening to perfect themselves in the English language; in fact, that the longer the Boers remained in the field, the more inevitable must become their ultimate extinction as a race. Unfortunately that



was the reverse of the language held in the South African and British Press, and the doleful stories that were being told helped to excite the confidence and strengthen the resolution of all the wavering and half-hearted in the field.

But the *Post* had little inducement to speak cheerfully if heed were to be paid to such a communication as was received at the same time from an American gentleman. According to him we were to be invaded shortly by France. We had other enemies to guard against; notably Germany, Russia, Spain, Holland, and Belgium. Our only hope of salvation lay in doubling our fleet and establishing compulsory military service without delay. Incidentally, our rifles were useless; we were short of coal, and our workers were all in foreign pay to strike at the outbreak of war. Our officers were frightfully incompetent, and our feeble rank and file filled all military observers with astonishment and contempt. Our despicable mental and moral weakness in dealing with the Boers had convinced all nations of our decadence. Our only possible policy was to deport every Dutch man, woman and child out of South Africa, something certainly very unlike and more drastic than that which subsequently came to be adopted.

Instead of devoting its space to amplifying this copious programme the *Morning Post* undertook a task at once more practical and beneficial. Early in 1900 a Committee had been formed in South Africa for the purpose of supplying the troops with warm clothing and such comforts as were appropriate. The organisers were Lady Airlie, Lady Edward Cecil, and Lady Charles Bentinck. Mrs Selater became secretary, and worked without ceasing until the war was

over. When the three other ladies returned home they continued their efforts; Lady Charles acted as secretary in England, and during her illness her place was taken by her mother, Mrs Seymour Grenfell. The other members of the committee at home were Lady Derby, Lady Bective, Lady Romilly, and Mrs Currey, of whom the last undertook to receive and forward presents in kind. The obvious difficulty was to raise sufficient funds. In September the *Morning Post* took up the appeal, and in the course of six weeks £28,000 were collected, with the result that it was possible to make the following consignments for Christmas 1901: 223,400 lbs. of plum pudding, 220,000 lbs. of tobacco, 182,528 pipes, besides quantities of socks, shirts, handkerchiefs, housewives, and other necessities. Wallets stamped with Queen Alexandra's<sup>1</sup> monogram were also provided for the nurses. That these were appreciated is shown by the fact that some nurses who had come home invalided, or in charge of invalids, called at the office to ask whether there were spare wallets for them. Letters of thanks poured in from all quarters and all ranks; here is a specimen:—

MOSQUITO POINT No. 3,  
JOUBERT'S KOP,  
31 Jan. 1902.

*To the Editor of the "Morning Post."*

DEAR SIR,—Allow me through the columns of your valuable paper to tender the heartfelt thanks on behalf of myself and nine men of D Co., 1st Bn. Rifle Brigade, at the above post to you and the subscribers of your Field Force Fund for the very nice parcels received from you. Each one was highly delighted and thankful for his nice present from the old country. . . . With our very best thanks and hearty New Year's greetings. . . .

H. WOMBWELL, *Sergt.*

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<sup>1</sup> Her Majesty was Patroness of the Fund.

A glance at the correspondence shows that the labour entailed was enormous. There was no central body. The ladies were dispersed in their own homes: this involved constant letter-writing. Oliver had to comply with War Office regulations, and take his chance with Government transports. Endless arrangements had to be made, constant difficulties to be overcome, and occasional trials to be borne, such as the discovery that tobacco might be imported duty free at St Helena for the Boer prisoners, whilst the local duty was levied on that which was intended for British soldiers. It should seem that such an addition to his normal duties must have imposed an intolerable burden; but by untiring assiduity he made the undertaking a complete success, and had good cause to be gratified with his achievement.

The year 1902 showed no diminution in Lord Glenesk's public spirit. In the spring he was at Cannes as usual, whence he continued to write encouragingly to Oliver: "The *M.P.* looks well with the new City article: quite an imperial paper. I congratulate you on your plunge and most successful swim." In June he was back in London, ready to attend the Coronation.

*Lord Glenesk to Lady Somers.*

24 June 1902.

. . . Only yesterday the King drove in an open carriage, showing himself, as the people thought, quite well . . . and here to-day he has five doctors cutting at him and the coronation postponed to the Greek calends; for, if all goes well, he will take months to recover. Off go my provisions to hospitals and down come the flowers.<sup>1</sup> . . . The disappointment

<sup>1</sup> The balcony in Piccadilly was always a gathering-place for his friends on occasions of public processions.

of the millions is pathetic, but everyone appears more sorry for the King than for himself. Poor King, he had determined to face it all. . . . One does not know which way to turn to distract one's mind.

This observation of Lord Glenesk's is corroborated by the report of a foreign diplomatist who made it his business to ride about on omnibuses to hear what disappointed people were saying. There was one and only one sentiment, he declared—sorrow and anxiety for the King. The forecast in the letter was happily mistaken: contrary to common expectation, the King was able to carry out his intention and was crowned before Parliament rose in August.

Another letter of this period relates an interesting conversation.

*The Same to the Same.*

14 July 1902.

. . . . Just come from a wonderful ball at Mrs Bischoffsheim's. She had Balfour and Oliver at dinner. . . . K[itcheener] told me that when the Boers were coming in, they asked the Orange Staters whether he would not telegraph for Fischer to come and advise them from Europe—it would be most valuable, etc., etc. K. replied, "If I send for Fischer for you, the Transvaalers will ask for Leyds." "No, no; never Leyds . . . !" K.: "Well, you see you won't let me send for Leyds and I won't send for Fischer." Admirably turned! . . . He was so glad to see H. B. and Oliver, and simply behaved as one of the family.

In June Lord Glenesk attended and spoke at the Mansion House in support of a proposal to present King Edward with a coronation gift in the form of a special subscription to the King's Hospital Fund; and turning precept into practice he made a liberal contribution on his own account. In July he was busy again. He had assisted his friend Lord Kitchener in

the establishment of a college at Khartoum. To this service he now added the agency of the *Morning Post* in support of the project for erecting there a statue of Gordon. Beyond appealing for funds he personally undertook negotiations with the sculptor, the late Mr Onslow Ford. He then arranged with the authorities of the city of Westminster for a site where the statue might for a time be seen in London. Finally he saw to its transport, and remained responsible until he received official notification that it had been safely set up upon the scene of Gordon's death. All this entailed much work and some difficulties and vexations, but he had his reward on 19th July, when he formally invited the Duke of Cambridge to unveil the statue in St Martin's Place, and received in return the public thanks of Lord Kitchener to "the readers of the *Morning Post* for carrying out the idea which I started some time ago, and which Lord Glenesk has kindly taken up and carried to this successful conclusion." Later on he went again to Homburg.

*Lord Glenesk to Lady Somers.*

*Aug. 20.*

. . . . In the evening, with Devonshire, Cork, Cranborne, and Col. Davidson, I had the honour to be commanded to dine with the Court, and enjoyed it much. Only the Empress and four ladies. I did not get a lady at dinner, but pounced on a most pleasant maid-of-honour afterwards. . . . After the Empress retired we all smoked and had a delightful evening: the Emperor was full of chaff and fun. As luck would have it the talk opened out far—now a story of Palmerston, now a reminiscence of Schouvaloff and Lord Derby; now a recitation. . . . The E. went into fits of laughter, and I had the great good fortune of pleasing. . . . Give my love to the Dee and the braes and all the winged and horned

inhabitants. The scenery, every inch of it, is for ever photographed in my eyesight—and the people and their ways, and the clouds and mists, and the music of waters and winds—dear, always dear.

Oliver meanwhile was as busy as ever. In May he made what he announced to be his first appearance in the chair by presiding over a large assembly at the annual dinner of the Association of Correctors of the Press, when Sir William Russell, Sir Frederick Maurice, Sir F. C. Gould, and the Duke of Marlborough were amongst the speakers. Out of his correspondence one amusing letter must be taken as a proof that his experiences were not always flattering to his profession :—

DEAR MR BORTHWICK,—To-day I happened to enquire who I had the pleasure of sitting next at dinner last night and was informed accordingly ; therefore I feel it incumbent on me to write and say that while of course I cannot retract what I said with respect to certain inaccuracies sometimes appearing in the Press, I beg you to understand that my remarks were by no means intended in any way to insult or hurt you. . . . I am well aware how generally correct your journal is in all the information it gives.

In the autumn he paid the visit to America the purpose of which has been described in a former chapter. On 30th October the *New York Herald*, under a bold headline "Messages for Ambassador," announced that "Mr A. Borthwick, member of the Household of King Edward, and bearer of confidential messages to the British Ambassador, reported his arrival at New York, but failed to indicate when he may be expected at Washington. No official information of his arrival or of the purport of the message he bears has reached White House or State Department."



Now it is a common occurrence for a traveller to carry a Foreign Office bag: so humble an individual as the present writer has done it. It involves a certain amount of responsibility and inconvenience, seeing that it has to be guarded like a precious jewel: the only advantage accruing is privileged treatment in customs-houses. It is not difficult to see how the legend of Oliver's mysterious mission gained currency. The explanation was at once forthcoming, and Laffan's agency telegraphed: "The Hon. Oliver Andrew Borthwick has arrived in Washington, and laughed at the report that he is the bearer of confidential and valuable documents. He admitted he brought some documents, but said that this did not mean that they were of an extraordinary character. He added the principal object of his visit to the United States was to study the American newspaper system for the benefit of his father, Baron Glenesk, proprietor of the London *Morning Post*."

The war was now over, and there was an end of that anxious phase of Oliver's work as a journalist. His visit to America was of first-rate importance in its bearing on the development and future working of the paper. He gave orders for plant and machinery of the newest invention, and he brought home designs for the use of steel frameworks in building, to be applied to the new *Morning Post* offices. But of more momentous interest was the political crisis that was at hand. In February 1903 he was back in London, writing to his sister: "As Dunn<sup>1</sup> got the flu the other night I have been suddenly called on to do his duty, and with all my other work have found it considerably more than

<sup>1</sup> Editor of the *Morning Post* 1897-1905.

enough, especially as I am only now getting over the influenza myself."

Throughout these pages it has been repeatedly shown that the *Morning Post* consistently adhered to its hostility towards Free Trade and its readiness to welcome a reversal of our fiscal system under any name it might assume. At length the hour had come and the man. On 15th May Mr Chamberlain spoke at Birmingham, and the question was immediately lifted out of the region of newspaper discussion and abstract resolutions into the region of what is called practical politics. It would be wholly inopportune here to touch the fringe of the controversy. The strife which was suddenly and violently awakened is raging still, and the issue is not yet. It is only pertinent to this narrative to record that as the *Morning Post* was, as might have been expected, amongst the first to hail the new evangel, so whilst these lines are being written it is admittedly the most firm and uncompromising advocate of Tariff Reform as the supreme question of the day. One of the earliest consequences of the movement was the parting of which mention was made some time ago. Mr Winston Churchill had good cause to speak comfortable words of the *Morning Post*. From the first moment of his appearance in public life he had been chronicled and encouraged in the paper. His speeches were at once reported with a fulness seldom accorded to so young and untried a man; his character and promise were held up to admiration in leading articles. Subsequently, as we have seen, he had business relations with the management of a satisfactory character: Oliver was his familiar friend. But he had no hesitation in declaring himself an opponent now:—

*W. S. Churchill to Oliver Borthwick.*

BLENHEIM PALACE, May 30.

MY DEAR OLIVER,—This is a line, written at the first opportunity, to implore you, as an old friend, not to commit the *Morning Post* to the support of Chamberlain's scheme. If it succeeded, it would break up the Empire, and in failing, as it is bound to do, it may do the most terrible injury to the Conservative party. . . . Do not be dragged at the tail of the *Times*, which is simply a rampant Protectionist, and will, not for the first time, get badly left.

June 5.

I will fix a rendez-vous next week. Of course it is impossible to discuss these things in a letter: but I implore you to hedge. Believe me, I am right. RUIN—party, national, and Imperial—is all that can follow Chamberlain's policy.—Yours ever,

W.

Very different were the letters which reached him from others. He was only reproached for not going further and immediately proclaiming Mr Chamberlain as leader of the party. Mr Chamberlain, he was told, was the only possible Prime Minister for the future—his one shortcoming was a too scrupulous sense of loyalty to Mr Balfour, who, by his indecision, had abrogated his leadership and must be superseded. Oliver was himself no laggard in spirit, and, as we know, he had not felt entire confidence in Mr Balfour during the war; he undoubtedly desired the forward policy now. But studying the reports that reached him he probably put faith in the predictions that Tariff Reform was to sweep the country at the next General Election, and consoled himself with the reflection that in that case Mr Chamberlain must come back bringing his sheaves with him.

Meanwhile he beheld Mr Balfour in a sore dilemma. The thanes were flying from him. In September Mr

Chamberlain left the Cabinet to pursue his campaign unfettered ; with him went Lord George Hamilton and Mr Ritchie. The Duke of Devonshire remained, and that was accounted an invaluable asset ; but presently he broke away and followed the others. He left behind him, it is true, two relatives, who had recently received promotion in the Government, but the loss of his personal influence was a grave matter. Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Mr Arthur Elliot had meanwhile resigned. The Cabinet was split ; the party, although mainly favourable to the change, was demoralised : old and binding ties were being severed between men and party, between constituent and member. Discord was breaking out in private life : men felt so warmly that personal animosity was taking the place of political ardour. Even the women of England were agitated. But in the Borthwick household there was unanimity and enthusiasm, and before the year was out the inaugural meeting of "the Tariff Reform League : Ladies' Section," was held in Lord Glenesk's house. Sir Vincent Caillard was the chairman, and the speakers were Miss Violet Brooke Hunt, whose subsequent exertions in the cause are well known, Sir F. Young, Susan Lady Malmesbury, Mr Leo Maxse, and Lord Henry Fitzgerald. It is far too soon to take a dispassionate view of the situation ; and it is not even possible to be wise after the event, because the event has not yet declared itself. There was an upheaval, and there are still rumblings and occasional shocks ; but the surface has settled down to its new form. Parties have re-arranged themselves on broad lines, and we shall see which, laughing last, will laugh loudest. Only this comment may be permitted—Mr Balfour was assailed on all sides by critics of his negative

attitude. He was reproached for not taking a strong and definite line, and for allowing the party to drift into confusion. It may be that when the history of the time comes to be written it will be discovered that nothing but his patience and adroitness rendered it possible for the party to emerge with any kind of consistency; that only his skill prevented a convulsion which would have left it an absolute wreck. The art of leadership does not lie in following: neither does it lie in driving. If a few bolters must be sacrificed, that is no reason for encouraging a stampede.

Oliver at all events had no uncongenial task in proclaiming the new era with all his heart. He could not foresee that a cruel affliction was to strike down the great protagonist in the zenith of his career, and he became the mouthpiece of all those who unreservedly put themselves under Mr Chamberlain's leadership and confidently reckoned on his ultimate triumph.

To one friend and relative, who was by no means in accord with these sentiments, he made an interesting proposal at this time:—

*Sir William Harcourt to Oliver Borthwick.*

I am much pleased and flattered at your proposal that I should review Morley's *Gladstone*, but there is an old and wise maxim that you should never sell a horse to a friend, which I might match by the saying you should not take an article from an uncle. But it is not you that I dread: I dare not criticise the handiwork of my friends. They are never satisfied either with the praise or the reverse which is awarded. It is a great subject, which demands to be greatly treated and freely canvassed. At what a singular moment in the history of politics it arrives. There has been nothing like it in my memory.

The story draws to an end, for the tragedy which was beginning was also to be the closing down of Lord Glenesk's life; all that followed was in the nature of anti-climax.

In a previous chapter Oliver's career, with its premature end, was outlined. His illness and death afford no subject for published narrative: the sadness itself demands silence. In June 1904 he was to have presided at the dinner of the Newsvendors Association and received, amongst other letters, this, which is pleasant to read as evidence that the late War Minister bore no grudge against the relentless critic of the War Office:—

*June 17, '04.*

MY DEAR BORTHWICK,—Sending my contribution to the Newsvendors to-day reminds me of your kind note. I am so very sorry to hear of your illness, and hope you will emerge soon completely restored. I was sadly clipped of the Newsvendors dinner by Acland-Hood's<sup>1</sup> importunity, and thus saved the graceful tribute I had intended to deliver to your efforts.—Yours very truly, ST JOHN BRODRICK.

In September an operation had to be performed; but the gravity of the case was not generally known. In a letter to his sister he had once confessed that complaint of overwork was his constant cry. Now that he had the utmost cause to lament and ask for pity, he was singularly reticent. He undoubtedly felt that if his life was to be cut short it would be a bitter disappointment to his father: other heir there was none. Therefore he made the bravest efforts to conceal the truth and to put a hopeful face on what he probably knew to be a hopeless case. There was partial recovery, and pathetic semblance of good cheer. But true comfort there was none. He presently was taken to a house at Hamp-

<sup>1</sup> The Chief Whip in the House of Commons.



stead, where he awaited the appointed hour, fortified by a noble and unselfish courage, and cherished by the sister with whom he had been united since infancy in the bonds of indissoluble devotion. He died on 23rd March 1905, and was buried on the 28th, the seventh anniversary of his mother's death. Not only was it the eclipse of much promise: in the short span allotted him he had accomplished much. He had made the force of his personality felt in the office and beyond it, and this he had done without incurring the jealousy of older men; which is perhaps the best possible testimony to the amiability of his nature. But beyond the literary and political instinct which enabled him to gratify his ambition, he left, as we have already learnt, permanent memorials of another kind. On 11th May Lord Glenesk wrote to Lady Bathurst:—

For the first time in its life the *M.P.* has a fourteen-page paper to-day. They were as excited at the office as Allen and the children could have been. Our machines can print a sixteen-page paper just as easily. . . . But it was very sad that O. was not there to see his own work accomplished.<sup>1</sup>

And the new offices were built. The rapid rise in circulation after the reduction of price to a penny in 1881 had made an extension of premises necessary. The adjacent house in Wellington Street, running down to the Strand, had been acquired, and a new building erected. Now, the London County Council's improvement scheme had required an alteration of the site, and Lord Glenesk was obliged to make fresh arrangements. But no migration was necessary; he was able to buy

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written from the temporary building used during reconstruction. The new machinery was installed there. It could, as a matter of fact, have produced a far larger paper than this, had further expansion been deemed desirable.







*Great Officers of the Morning Post 346 Strand  
Completed 1907*



the freehold of sufficient ground, in accordance with the new plan, and to begin rebuilding. Oliver had set his heart on what he considered a suitable home for the paper. Lord Glenesk's approval and consent were of course required; having obtained these, Oliver did the rest. Negotiations with architect and contractor, and the solution of all the problems that arise in the course of such an undertaking, were in his hands, and the building that stands to-day was his own child.<sup>1</sup>

Not necessarily connected with journalism, but directly connected with Oliver, there remains the Embankment Home. In 1897 a start had been made with a project to help the outcast. A member of the staff was deputed to reconnoitre, and his report contained a curious suggestion. The waifs who frequented the London parks must be held to have gone under: they had, as a rule, lost the power and the will to work. With the poor people on the Embankment it was otherwise. They were on the border line of despair very often, but, as a class, they had not abandoned hope nor lost all capacity; they would work if they were given a chance, and they clung to the neighbourhood where it might be found. The readers of the *Post* immediately provided funds, and a small labour home in Millbank Street was taken over. In the following July larger premises in the same street were taken, and were formally opened by the late Duke of Westminster. The first principles of the establishment were that all benefits offered should be paid for by labour, and that inmates should serve a period of probation before being passed on to fixed

<sup>1</sup> Mr G. W. Smalley in the *New York Tribune* (Dec. 1909) relates that on one occasion Lord Glenesk bade him ask Oliver, next time they met, to explain his new projects. He had been given a free hand. This would no doubt refer to the new machinery as well as the building.



employment. Newcomers were tested in the labour side of the establishment, and, having proved their worthiness, were promoted to the lodging-house. The work proceeded smoothly until 1903, when the County Council gave notice that Millbank Street was to be pulled down. Then a bold step was taken. The readers of the *Post* responded gallantly to a special appeal: a freehold property in the New Kent Road was acquired; new buildings were erected, and the charity was incorporated under the Companies Act. The distinction between labour home and lodging-house was preserved, but a chapel was provided for common use. Building operations at once gave employment to many inmates of the Millbank Street home.

Here stands an enduring monument with the title of the "Oliver Borthwick Memorial *Morning Post* Embankment Home." It is difficult to exaggerate the value of this institution: by means of it, men struggling with adversity are helped to find permanent work; they are restored to their friends; they are enabled to emigrate; they are encouraged to enter the navy and army; at the worst they are given occupation in place of idleness; or in the last extremity they are passed on to hospitals, and they need not die without the shelter of a roof. Besides the principle of finding and providing employment, temporary lodging is afforded, or food alone is administered to the hungry. Full publicity is given to the details of management, and readers of the *Morning Post* may judge for themselves whether their charity is being profitably administered.

The loss of Oliver compelled Lord Glenesk to reconsider his position. He was now seventy-five—by two lustrums past the recognised age for retirement in

the public service. Yet he at once resumed control of the paper. His letters to his daughter show that he had lost none of his mental energy, and his interest in foreign politics was as lively as it had been half a century before. He carried on the work in connection with the building in the Strand and the New Kent Road, and he did not shrink from night work in the office. But there remained the future to provide for.

What was to become of the *Post* hereafter? Lord Glenesk was advised that if he left the property as part of his estate, the executors might feel bound to sell it. He therefore formed a company, composed of the executors themselves. Thus, as we have seen, Mr Lewis Harcourt<sup>1</sup> is nominally one of the directors of the paper most antagonistic to his own political party; but it is a matter of common knowledge that in effect it was bequeathed to Lady Bathurst. Her correspondence with her father, covering this period, sets forth her views on social and political questions with such clearness and insight that he may well have felt satisfied that the paper was certainly not going to fall into feeble hands. It will be sufficient, however, to quote one or two paragraphs in the lighter vein. In February 1906 she wrote a letter in the *Morning Post* and signed it "Tariff Reformer." This so greatly pleased one reader that he wrote and begged her to attend a meeting of a Farmers' Club at which he was going to read a paper. He had apparently ascertained the name of the writer but not the sex, for his letter was addressed to "— Bathurst, Esq., Cirencester." Perhaps this wrong assumption enhanced the compliment.

Two more children's stories must be added. Of

<sup>1</sup> Lord and Lady Bathurst and Colonel Ivor Maxse were also executors.

her eldest boy, who had lately gone to school, she writes :—

You know I write politics to him occasionally, and it was rather useful once, because the boys were being questioned in general knowledge, and Allen was top. He had been getting up slowly, but what put him there was the question, "Who is Prime Minister at present?" and Allen was the only boy who knew.

The following story of her second son at the age of four has almost a scientific interest. Lady Bathurst writes from Pinbury—a secluded dwelling a few miles from Cirencester House, where the family spend some time in the autumn :—

He came weeping to my bedroom this morning and I asked him why. "I didn't want to come because it's so quiet" (pronounced kiart). Then, with a sigh and looking out of the window, "It's so kiart here inside and outside."

"Don't you like quiet places?"

"No; I like kiart places a little and noisy places very much."

I cheered him by saying he was going to Ciceter to-morrow.

"Oh, but Ciceter's kiart too."

He wants the cabs and motors of London. It shows the nonsense talked . . . of poor little children who never see a flower or play in a field. Why, most of them don't want to. Flowers and fields give no pleasure to Billy: motors and buses are what he craves for."

A little later :—

I went to the nursery whilst Billy was having his supper. After a bit he laid down his spoon, sighed, and said, "I'm *so* tired of all this talking, and I want to go to bed." I often feel inclined to say the same.

In another letter she lays an injunction on her father which, in the interest of the present writer, and still more in the interest of his readers, it is to be deplored that he neglected to obey: "I'm so glad Lady Dorothy

[Nevill] urged you again to write. . . . You will have another horror to fear, if you don't write your memoirs, namely, that I shall concoct my own private version of your stories; and as I can neither write good English nor state a fact accurately, just think what a hash there will be. So in self-defence you really must write." In which there is too much modesty, but in principle much truth.

In 1907 died Miss Borthwick, her brother's faithful friend and companion; and now he was indeed alone. Only his daughter remained, and it was quite impossible that with her own family and home ties she could be continually with him; but she did all that could be done to enliven his solitude.

Lord Glenesk's health had begun to fail, and he needed careful tending; but he never became a chronic invalid, and he kept the control of the paper in his own hands until a month before his death. The burden of his labours was much alleviated by the fact that in Mr Fabian Ware he had an editor of whose ability and discretion he was well assured. Mr Ware had worked in thorough harmony with Oliver, concurring with him in principles and ideals. He was now no less ready and able to appreciate the views of his chief, and interpret them with sincerity. Meanwhile the "management" of the paper was in the hands of Mr E. E. Peacock, a trusted veteran of the staff, whose death in the autumn of 1909 was observed with many signs of honour on the part of the profession to which he belonged.

For the last year or two of his life Lord Glenesk spent the autumn at Blelach in Aberdeenshire, where he found comfort and pleasure in the society of some of his old friends. This he quitted for the last time on 30th October

1908. He had caught a cold, and the journey made him worse. He stayed in Piccadilly, and it was hoped that the mischief might be dispelled; but the resisting powers were worn out. Grave symptoms appeared, and on 24th November the end came peacefully.

Having endeavoured to tell the story of his life and to describe his character, it would be futile here to range at large through the list of his achievements, or prepare a catalogue of his virtues. If this work has been done honestly, and with any prospect of success, the nature of the man will stand revealed in his known deeds and recorded words. There remains, however,

“The best portion of a good man’s life—  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love,”

the fruits of a generous heart that are born to blush unseen. That Lord Glenesk does not fail in this test a few letters, come upon at random, will serve to prove. In one case he gives himself considerable trouble to press the claims of a lady for a Civil List pension in the face of technical difficulties. To one demand rather violent in tone, he replies: “On account of your health and for the sake of old times I comply with your request; but in no way do I admit that any sum great or small is owing to you.” A lady writes: “I received your gracious letter this morning with a cheque for £50. It is impossible for me to thank you enough, nor tell you the blessing it will be to my husband. . . . He will sleep more now at nights.” Another letter acknowledges a gift of £250; and again one of £500. The last is said to have come “in the nick of time . . . and is but another added to the many priceless and unpayable services for which I have been indebted to

you." It need only be added that Lord Glenesk did not forget the needs and occasions of those to whom he was related.

He had warmed both hands at the fire of life, but he had no desire to keep all the geniality to himself, and he radiated it out upon his neighbours. He had had his share of stress and struggle, but he had likewise had large measure of prosperity and success. As he had been ready to bear the burdens of others at the beginning, so he was careful to relieve their necessities at the end. He had lived his life to the full; his work was done; perhaps he was willing to depart hence :

"Glad did I live and gladly die,  
And I laid me down with a will."





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